MY DOGS IN The NORTHLAND

By

EGERTON R. YOUNG

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BY

EGERTON R. YOUNG

Author of

"ON THE INDIAN TRAIL," "THE APOSTLE OF THE NORTH," "THREE BOYS IN THE WILD NORTHLAND," ETC.

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Dedicated
to
My Dear Wife and Children,
partners with me in many of the scenes
herein related.

INTRODUCTION

ALL the dogs of which I here write are dead. Was it not Sir Walter Scott who said, "I hate to love a dog, he lives so short a life?" Yet Sir Walter did love dogs with rare devotion, as the traditions of Abbotsford, as well as much that he himself has written, affirm.

When a lad I was not allowed to keep a dog. My father in his early manhood days saw a man smothered to death between two great feather beds because he was a hopeless victim of hydrophobia, caused by the bite of a mad dog. So no dog was allowed in our home.

Fortunately for us boys, or rather for the dogs, we (and there were only seven of us) were all very fond of these prohibited animals, and were ever ready to lend our jackknives or skates to any neighbouring boy if he would only let us play with his dog.

It was a marvellous transition from that country parsonage where the joyous bark

of a canine friend, "The first to welcome, the foremost to defend," was never heard, to the wild adventurous life in the Northland. There, in the first business transaction with my predecessor, I was told that there were a dozen dogs and puppies of Huskie breed, outside, anxious to make my acquaintance!

It is a trite saying that "all things come to him who waits." It was correct in this case anyway, for the man who as a boy had peremptorily been refused the possession of the smallest puppy now entered into the ownership of a pack of cunning rascals who were quite competent to test his patience and sharpen his wits.

If in Nature's broad domains there is a place for everything, we think that the natural home of the large dog is in the cold Northland. There, during those long winters he can work and thus prove his right to a comfortable living. Amidst the blizzards of the Arctic frosts often exposed to hardships and privations that no other creature than man and himself could stand, there he thrives, and endures and with his master, triumphs.

For years, with great dogs, I toiled and

often with them was in great perils. Much of my work was accomplished by their aid. So I believe in dogs, and here in this book I have written of some of them and their deeds.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
I.	My Eskimo or Huskie Dogs. . . .	17
II.	With Wild Eskimo Dogs Under the Aurora.	30
III.	Robber Dogs and an Indian Council .	46
IV.	Jack, the Giant St. Bernard. . .	66
V.	Jack, and Many Things Concerning Him	80
VI.	Jack Triumphant in the Blizzard. .	96
VII.	Jack in Civilization	113
VIII.	Cuffy, the Beautiful Newfoundland Dog	125
IX.	Voyageur, the Matchless Leader. .	143
X.	Voyageur, the Broken-hearted. . .	164
XI.	Rover I, the Successful Dog Doctor. .	173
XII.	Rover II, also Called Kimo. . . .	184
XIII.	Muff, the Affectionate Mother Dog. .	195
XIV.	Cæsar, the Clever Rascal. . . .	210
XV.	Koona, the Eskimo Leader. . . .	230
XVI.	Travelling with Dogs in Northern Wilds	243
XVII.	Still on the Trail with the Dogs. .	260
XVIII.	Our Dogs in Summer Time. . . .	270
XIX.	Cui Bono?	278

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Facing Page

Dr. Young in Winter Dress.....Title
They Dashed in Wild Excitement After the Fox.. 40
I Belaboured Him With the Oak Whip-handle.... 42
It Was a Wild, Mad Leap..... 44
A Half-dozen Wild Looking Indians Rushed into Our Midst..... 55
Dr. Young and Jack..... 66
Jumping Around the Fire Like a Dancing Bear.... 90
A Ride in a Wild, Howling Blizzard..... 106
Dr. Young and Cuffy..... 126
The Lordly Pines in Winter Dress..... 245
Still on the Trail With the Dogs..... 260
A Medicine Man..... 280

My Dogs in the Northland

I

MY ESKIMO OR HUSKIE DOGS

THEY haunt me to this very day—those Eskimo dogs! I wake up sometimes in the night with a start, for I have been dreaming that the jealous, quarrelsome fellows were once more fighting for what seemed to be the honour of sleeping on my head.

And yet they were good dogs for their work, and, I suppose, take them all in all, they have been able to perform what no other dogs in the world could have accomplished.

Nansen, Greely, Rae, and many others have given unstinted praise to the courage and endurance, as well as to the sagacity and intelligence of these northern dogs, that generally receive more kicks and curses than caresses or kind words. Denizens of those Arctic regions, where a chronic state

of starvation is the normal condition of all the inhabitants, where might is right, with both man and beast, it is hardly to be wondered at, that it is next to an impossibility ever to teach the Eskimo dog to be honest. Steal he will, from puppyhood to old age.

This weakness for appropriation, with my dogs of this breed, to put it thus mildly, was the constant cause of many rows and conflicts with them. It was the ultimate reason why, after some winters' experience and efforts for their reformation, I at length banished them from my kennels, as far as possible, and filled up my trains with St. Bernards and Newfoundlands or a mixture of breeds in which these predominated.

Still these Eskimo, or Huskie dogs—for they are sometimes called by one name and sometimes by the other, have justly won for themselves a name and a record that will cause them to hold a high place among animals that have been of real service to the human race. But few of them are ever kept for mere pleasure or pastime. It is because they are so serviceable to man, and at times absolutely invaluable to him, that they deservedly stand in such esteem with the admirers of the canine race.

The pure Eskimo dog is not devoid of beauty. His compact body, well furred; his sharp-pointed, alert-looking ears; his fox-like muzzle; his good legs and firm, hard feet; his bushy tail, of which he often seems so proud; and his bright, roguish eyes, place him in no mean position among the other dogs of the world. His colour varies from the purest white to jet black. I owned two so absolutely white that not a coloured hair could be found on either of them. They were named Koona and Pa-qua-sha-kun, Snow and Flour, by the Indians, on account of their spotless whiteness.

A favourite colour is a kind of light mouse-grey. Dogs of this kind are, however, rare, but when obtained from the natives are considered of greater intelligence than others and are valued accordingly. Still the colour, as a general thing, is not often taken into consideration, or considered as evidence against the purity of their blood.

The working weight of my Eskimo dogs ranged from sixty to a hundred and thirty pounds. It seemed rather remarkable that some of the lighter dogs were quite equal in drawing power to others that were very much larger and heavier. In my first win-

ter's experience with dogs in the Hudson's Bay Territories, I was the fortunate or unfortunate owner of twelve of them. It was evident from their appearance that, in the eyes of an expert, they would not all have been classed as pure bred Eskimo. Still there was enough of that breed in them to dominate everything else and to cause them to act in the most thoroughbred fashion.

They had, in common with all other dogs—and there were hundreds of them in the Indian village where we resided—the habit of setting up the most discordant howlings three or four times during the night, especially in the winter months.

These strange, weird howlings would begin at about nine o'clock. At that hour the people were generally in their little houses or wigwams, and the place was as quiet as midnight. Then suddenly would break on the stillness of that wintry night, the distant wolf-like howlings of an Eskimo dog.

At first it sounded very eerie-like, and not unmusical. It seemed when heard far away like a succession of O-O-O-O's, long drawn out, rising and falling on the clear frosty air. This alone would not have been annoying, but the trouble was, it was the

signal for every dog within hearing—and there were multitudes of them in those days of abundance of fish—to take up the doleful notes and add to them every sound in a dog's gamut. Then for a few minutes there was the most ear-splitting din that ever mortals heard. From the deep voices of the old dogs down to the comical yelps of the little puppies, the air was charged and surcharged with all manner of noises, musical and otherwise, that it is in the power of dogs to make. At first it nearly drove us wild. My dozen dogs were just as bad as the others. When the nerve-breaking din began, vainly would I rush out among them, armed with the first weapons that came to hand. It made not the slightest difference for howl, roar, squeal, yelp, bark, and make other sounds indescribable they would, until the spell was over, even if assailed with clubs, whips, boot-jacks, ink bottles, whitefish, or whatever else came first to hand. At about midnight these horrid choruses were repeated and then again at about three o'clock in the morning.

When I first mentioned this strange habit of those dogs to the gentlemen of the Hudson's Bay Trading Company, and spoke of

the annoyance they occasioned, they only laughed and replied, "Oh, you will get used to it and then never notice it." And so it was, impossible though it seemed. In a few weeks we peacefully slept while, like fiends just outside our window, these brutes were howling their loudest, as if in rivalry to the scores of other packs all around them.

I fancy I might have had more love for those Eskimo animals if by training, coaxing, petting, feeding or punishing, I could have succeeded in conquering their thievish habits. But it was an utter impossibility. Steal they always would and did. Anything eatable, and many things considered uneatable, they could not pass by. I have known them to leave their supper of whitefish to go and tear smoked moose-skin moccasins down from a clothes-line and greedily devour them. An old leather shirt was considered a dainty morsel, and at times there seemed to be more than even poetic justice in the fact that, if they could find the whip of a cruel driver, they speedily devoured the lash, even if it were ten feet long and only made of braided buckskin and loaded with shot!

Sometimes when on a journey, and a halt

was called for a rest or a meal, if the Indian drivers were not on the alert some of the dogs while apparently resting, would be eating the traces or harness of the dogs cuddled close beside them.

My good wife and I got tired of living on whitefish twenty-one times a week for six months of the year, as our principal article of food, and then the other six months having the same article of food only varied by the game of the country, such as wild cats, muskrats, rabbits, beaver, venison, snowbirds, and other things, with a limited supply of flour, tainted sometimes with coal-oil. So one summer, when I was going into what was then known as the Red River Settlement, the good wife said to me:

"Why not buy a sheep from one of the settlers and bring it out in your boat? We can keep it here in this stockaded yard where there is plenty of grass until the cold weather. Then it can be killed and the frost will keep it as long as desired. A little mutton occasionally would be an agreeable change in our bill of fare, and it would also remind us a little of civilization."

This was a capital suggestion, and so, when the time came, I put it into execution.

I had no difficulty in buying a fine, large sheep; and my friendly Indian boatman cheerfully prepared a safe, comfortable place for it in the stern of the boat. I purchased a good sickle, and every night when we camped on the shore, I found little trouble in securing abundance of wild luxuriant grass for my sheep. Without any accident we succeeded in reaching my distant northern home.

The sheep was duly placed in the well-stockaded yard and seemed perfectly safe from either prowling wolves or vicious Eskimo dogs.

The stockades were made of young spruce trees. The bark was peeled off and they were securely set in a trench dug in the ground. They were from eight inches to a foot in diameter, and from twelve to fifteen feet in height. They were placed as near together as possible, and all securely spiked to cross-bars on the inside.

Yet, in spite of all the efforts made for the safety of my sheep, my native dogs succeeded in getting in one night. Like wolves they speedily devoured poor Nannie, much to our sorrow and annoyance. The roguish, cunning rascals! The next morning after

they had thus feasted on my mutton that I had brought with such care four hundred miles, they prudently kept at a distance from me. They would sit up on their haunches and let me come within about a hundred feet of them but, "No nearer, thank you," they seemed to say. Clever fellows, they knew they deserved a good thrashing, but they seemed to think it best to put off the evil day until the master had in a measure got over his anger and would be more lenient in his punishment.

Wise dogs were they. For as I could not get my hands upon them to punish them the day the crime was discovered, I did not punish them when I did get hold of them. I argued, I think justly, that they would not have had the slightest idea of the reason why they were being chastised. So by prudently keeping beyond my reach for twenty-four hours, they escaped altogether.

Disappointed, but not discouraged, in this attempt to have some mutton for an occasional meal in that great Northland, I next tried to see what I could do with some pigs. So the next summer, when I made my annual trip to the Red River Settlement, I bought from a flourishing farmer a couple

of little pigs that were perhaps four or five months old. At a mill in the Settlement I purchased a quantity of ground pease and meal and away we started on our homeward journey.

Without any mishap we safely reached our destination. Improvements had been constantly going on and I had already built a new log stable. In it, near to the stalls of my cows—for I now had two of these valuable animals, I prepared a strong pen for my little porkers. The lively little fellows were there safely placed, and as the door of the stable was made of two-inch spruce plank, I felt that we were fairly sure of having some nice fresh pork for the coming winter.

Vain prognostications! What was a single door of spruce wood against the sharp teeth of a dozen Eskimo dogs!

I had noticed how alert and nervous the dogs ever were when it came near feeding time for the little pigs, as they, in the usual manner of their kind, expressed it by their lively squealing for their supper of sour milk and meal.

As the days went by, and no very serious efforts had been made by the dogs to get into

the stable, I began to feel that I had the upper hand this time and they were not to triumph over me, as they had in the matter of the sheep.

I confess I was two or three times disturbed somewhat, on going to feed the pigs, to find that in several places the dogs had with their sharp teeth, torn out the heavy pieces of wood that had been firmly fastened in between the great logs. However, as that only left them at the best, a space of two or three inches wide, they were still powerless to do any harm, and so I only laughed at their useless toil. I was also interested in noticing that every morning there were so many well-defined dog tracks around the stable. It was evident that they were not idle and so took the satisfaction when it was dark, to go and, as we used to say, at least have a good smell of the pigs.

Alas for our boastings! One morning when I was going out to see my piggies, which for weeks had been growing so famously, I was met by an Indian, who, in the quiet, cool manner of his people, said, "I think you need not trouble yourself or have Martin bother to waste any more food on the pigs."

Away I hurried. There before me was Martin, my faithful man of all work, at the stable. In the pen but little was left of the pigs. In a corner of the stable, with heads bloody and tempers roused, were some of my Eskimo dogs. Martin had caught them at this feast and had wisely blocked their way until I should arrive.

Keeping a watch on the dogs that were now wild to escape, we made an investigation of the manner in which they had won their victory over us this second time. Martin, when attending to his morning work, had found the door securely fastened as usual, but right through those spruce planks those dogs had cut their way with their teeth. They must have worked in turns and at a good deal of discomfort to themselves, as many of the slivers torn off were quite tinged with blood. Yet with all the mad frenzy of their natures, when aroused, after undoubtedly laying their plans to succeed in this way, they had thus triumphed. The cunning fellows selected a dark, wild, stormy night. We afterward remembered how the winds had howled and raged and had so aided them. Thus the noise they must necessarily have made in their cutting

and tearing at that wood, and their attack upon the pigs, had not been heard even by any of the Indians, although some of their dwelling places were not far distant. Disgusted and annoyed, I turned away.

"Shall we punish the dogs?" asked Martin.

"Do as you like," I replied, "but what good will it do them? Such is their nature and I am going to get rid of them as soon as possible. There are other kinds of dogs with none of their miserable ways, and I am going to have them if money or friends can secure them."

At once I returned to the house. Whether Martin gave them a thrashing or not, I never inquired. My efforts for the uplifting and the reformation of Eskimo dogs, as a class, then and there ceased. I had individual dogs afterward that I could trust when in harness, or tied securely to a tree or post, but that was the extent of my use for them.

II

WITH WILD ESKIMO DOGS UNDER THE AURORAS

"COME at once, and come as quickly as you can, for I have taken an overdose of quinine and am afraid I will die of hydrophobia!"

Such was the unique and startling communication that was brought to me one wintry day by an Indian hunter from an Indian settlement two hundred miles away.

The writer of it was an Indian native helper, who had been placed in temporary oversight of a mission station until an ordained missionary could be secured to take full charge of the place. This native worker was not destitute of ability or zeal, but he had had the misfortune to get hold of a medical volume that gave a rather vivid description of many of the ills to which the human frame is subject. The Indian, who had quite a good knowledge of the English language, read this book with a feeling of horror. He was fascinated by it. It nearly

frightened him out of his wits. He fancied he was the possessor of nearly every disease therein described.

With all the medicines with which I had furnished him to heal the sicknesses of his people, he liberally dosed himself, until from their effects upon him he really became sick. This, of course, added to his horror and alarm. He neglected his work and spent his time in feeling his pulse, looking at his tongue in the glass, and industriously dosing himself with every variety of drugs in his possession. The climax was reached when he took an overdose of quinine. The word "hydrophobia," to him incomprehensible, seemed at the time a fitting word to represent his fears, as well as his feelings, and hence the remarkable epistle from him to me, which begins this chapter.

As speedily as possible I prepared three trains of dogs. Our sleds were heavily loaded, principally with food supplies for this Indian and his household.

I secured a capital Indian guide, whose duty was to run on his snowshoes ahead of our dogs, to indicate the direction. There was but little vestige of a road, as frequent blizzard storms swept through those north-

ern wastes and forests and obliterated any trail that might have been made by passing hunters.

As is customary and essential in travelling with dogs in that country, we had with us on our sleds our kettles, provisions, bedding, guns and everything absolutely essential to living out in the open air, independent of the rest of the world. We did not see a house on the whole route and only met with a few hunters through whose hunting grounds we passed. Three times when night overtook us we made our camp in the woods and there slept with no roof over us.

Abundance of fur robes and warm blankets made our wintry beds under the stars. We spent the nights as best we could. Sometimes as there we slept, the clouds arose and from them a heavy fall of snow silently covered us like a great warm blanket, and added much to our comfort.

After various adventures and mishaps, incident to such lands and such methods of travel, we reached the southern end of a lake about thirty miles long. On the northern end of this lake was situated the mission where lived my hypochondriacal Indian, towards whose house we were travel-

ling. As it was about sundown when we came in sight of the lake, and there was abundance of good wood for a winter camp, we there decided to spend the night and go on in the morning. However, ere we had unharnessed our dogs, we heard the shouts of Indians and the merry jingling of dog-bells.

It did not take long for my men to notify these strangers of our presence, and very speedily we were joined by them. To our surprise we found that the party consisted of my afflicted friend and a couple of Indian dog drivers. They each had a train of very large and fierce-looking Eskimo dogs. On my expressing my pleasure and satisfaction at seeing him so much better than I had expected, in view of his letter, he replied that the medicine book had told him that his disease would run its course in so many days, and so he thought that while it was doing so he would just run up and see me about it.

My Indian companions, whom I had told of the probably imaginary character of his ills, wanted as did I, to laugh at him, but we managed to keep our faces straight while he told us of the various diseases that

had assailed him since we had seen him six months before.

I comforted him with the assurance that I had not only food and other supplies in my dog-sleds for him, but medicine that would speedily drive out of him all of his diseases. This latter piece of information so delighted him that he at once proposed that I should give the medicine to him then and there.

However, this was not my plan for curing such a case of imaginary sickness, and so I decided that it would be much more effective and thorough, if we waited until we returned to his home. This did not satisfy him and then I had to tell him that I must insist on delay. As a compromise, however, it was decided that after a good supper at the camp fire, now brightly burning, we would continue the journey instead of camping there for the night.

The trail most of the way had been very difficult. Our loads were heavy and our dogs were so tired that they were in no humour for rapid travelling. It seemed almost cruel to push on, but this man, with all his imaginary ills, could not think of delay.

To judge by his appearance and energetic actions he was the healthiest man in the crowd. My Indians would have objected to continuing the journey if the stalwart Indian had not so eloquently detailed his multitudinous troubles. So it was resolved that we should go on, and as the lake was covered with fairly smooth ice, the travelling would now be much easier for the dogs.

The frozen lakes and rivers always give us our best roads for dog travelling. On the sick man's discovering that I had my medicines with me in my own cariole, he made a proposition to exchange dog trains with me for that home run. This was the cause of an exciting adventure and much trouble.

His dogs were large, powerful Eskimos, full of vitality and mischief. He had abundance of fish and so his dogs were in as fine condition as such dogs could be. For days they had been kept tied up in preparation for this long journey of two hundred miles, on which he had started. The thirty miles run on the ice from his home to this place, where we had met, had really only limbered up such animals for their work.

Our sleds were all repacked, with some of the heaviest bundles placed on those of these Indians who had met us. My tired dogs were unfastened from my cariole, and in their place, was attached the train of four fierce Eskimos.

My own faithful, cautious guide, as he carefully tucked the warm fur robes around me in the cariole, handed me a heavy dog whip and said that in all probability I would have to use it, if those dogs found out that they were dragging a white man. This whip had a heavy oak handle, less than two feet long, while the heavy, well-shotted lash was over fifteen feet in length.

The *sick* man, the owner of these dogs, as he straightened them out in the trail on the ice with their faces towards home, said to me:

"Now do not speak a word and there will be no trouble. They will run you to my home in less than three hours. They will keep on the trail we have made in coming on the ice even if there has been but little snow in which to mark it. They do not like white people, but if you do not speak to

them, in their anxiety to get home, they will never suspect."

I looked the fierce brutes over and then so placed my heavy whip that I could instantly seize it, if necessary, and made up my mind that I was in for a wild, exciting ride.

It was a magnificent night. The sun had gone down in unclouded splendour, and now the stars were shining with a beauty and clearness that only can be witnessed where there is absolutely no fog, or mist, or damp. The intense cold had cleared away all such obstructions. Before me was the great frozen lake stretching away and far beyond the distant horizon. To my inexperienced eye, there was on that icy expanse not the vestige of a road. Yet during the long hours of this intensely cold night, without a single human companion, I was going to trust myself to the care of four Eskimo animals, to run me thirty miles to a lonely log house on the distant shore. During those long hours, I was neither to cough, nor speak a single word, for fear of trouble, or perhaps a fierce battle with these savage brutes and, if it should take

place, who could tell which side would win in the conflict? No wonder my spirits rose and I felt that this was indeed a trip of no ordinary interest.

With the consolatory words of my guide that, after resting the weary dogs for an hour or two, they would follow in my trail, and with the hope that they would find me safe at the end, my adventurous journey was suddenly begun by the owner of the dogs applying his long whiplash to them, which of course started them off on a furious gallop.

It was indeed a glorious ride. The well-trained dogs were splendidly matched, and so in perfect unison they dashed along. My cariole was about ten feet long and eighteen inches wide. Its bottom was made of inch oak boards and its sides were of parchment. I sat well back in the rear end and was so well muffled in furs that only my eyes were visible. So narrow was my cariole that a certain amount of balancing was necessary when dashing over occasional snow-drifts, which at times are found even out on the great frozen lakes. But I had become used to this work, and so had no fear of an upset. For about fifteen miles

we thus sped on. The dogs would sometimes drop into a swift trot and then again resume their rapid gallop. They were on the home stretch, and so required no further incentive to urge them along.

It was a unique ride and exhilarating in the extreme. To add to the splendour of the starry heavens the wondrous aurora came dancing and flashing and blazing up before me in the northern sky. It formed into great armies which fought out the ghostly battles with no rude sounds to disturb the northern solitudes. Then when apparently satisfied with this performance they rolled across the heavens in great ribbons of light, from which they flung out long flags of purest white, which seemed as flags of truce from heaven to earth. Then suddenly, with all the rapidity of electrical phenomena, they changed to pink and yellow and then to blood-red crimson until the whole heavens seemed aglow with vivid colours so intense that the snowy particles on the ice caught the reflection, and when we dashed through them it seemed as though they were pools of the blood of thousands slain. Then again there was another transformation; and now as from the re-

gions of departed spirits, noiselessly flitted into dim vision the ghostly forms of multitudes clad in purest white or in robes of pink or yellow. In rhythmic measure, they danced along, just above the horizon and then with a sudden bound, they flew up into the heavens above us, only pausing in the midway course for a second, to flash out in some more glorious colour or to be changed into forms of more ravishing beauty. When the zenith was reached the grandest transformation of all took place. For here came whole multitudes from those who seemingly had been engaged in the carnival of blood, to the white-robed innocent and unstained spirits of light. In myriads they came, and as though every one knew its place they rapidly formed in the very zenith above us the crowning glory of the auroral displays, the perfect corona, the grandest vision the eye of man ever gazed upon. How it scintillated and blazed above us, a crown of splendour, a fit diadem for Him, "on whose head are many crowns!"

Then, as the whole corona blazed out in equal brightness, the shadow of my dogs was thrown completely under them. These ghostly shadows seemed to startle and

THEY DASHED IN WILD EXCITEMENT AFTER THE FOX.

stimulate their pace, as, to the sole music of their little bells, they rapidly sped along. They seemed also to startle something else. for out from a rocky island on our left, there dashed a splendid black fox. He was indeed a beauty, and so vivid was the Aurora that I had a very fine view of him, as he rapidly hurried across our trail and struck out for a well-wooded, rocky island, perhaps half a mile on our right.

The sight of him very much excited my dogs. Home, and their comrades and kennels, were for the time forgotten, and away from the home trail they dashed in wild, excitement after that fox. How far they would run in the pursuit, I could not tell, but every moment was taking us farther from the trail, and if it were once lost, could we find it again?

Thus I had to do a lot of thinking in a very short time and quickly decide what to do. We had come about half of the distance and there being at least fifteen miles yet to run, it was not safe to be madly racing after a fox out on this great lake. So I resolved to break the silence, and to turn the dogs into the home stretch, even if I had to fight them. The preparations necessary

were not many. Quickly bracing myself on my knees with my robes well around me, I gripped the heavy whip so that I could, if necessary, use the handle of it as a club. Then I sternly shouted to the dogs in Indian language to stop and then turn to the left. The instant they heard my voice, they did stop, and that so suddenly, that my rapidly moving cariole went sliding on and passed the rear dog of the train, as far as his traces would allow. Then they came for me furiously. The leader of the train was the fiercest of the four, and he led in the attack.

It was certainly well for me that he did so, for swinging the others around, brought them all into such a position that only one at a time could reach me. I am left-handed, and so, as he sprang at me, I guarded my face with my right hand well wrapped in furs, while I belaboured him over the head with the oak whiphandle. Three or four well administered blows were all he needed, and with a howl he dropped on the ice while the next one in the train tried his best to get hold of me. One fortunate clip on the side of his head sent him tumbling over on his leader, and then I had to face the third

I BELABOURED HIM WITH THE OAK WHIP-HANDLE.

one of the train. He proved the ugliest customer of all, and I never before imagined a dog's head could take such a pommelling ere he would give in. Failing to get hold of me, he tore the robes and parchment side of the cariole. It was well for me that the traces of the fourth dog, fastened to the front of the cariole, so held him back, that he was unable to do more than savagely growl at me, while he at times fastened his teeth into everything within reach. His efforts however kept the cariole twisting in a most erratic fashion, and so I had to keep up the fight and at the same time look well to my balance so as not to be upset.

With the third dog conquered, I uncoiled the long lash of the whip and shouting "Marche!" I vigourously and promiscuously used it on them. They did not wait for many applications but speedily sprang to their feet. The leader wheeled around to the left and away they flew. At first they seemed tangled up in the traces, but trained dogs are wonderfully clever in straightening out from these mixups and so it was then. On they sped to the left until their sharp scent at once indicated when the home trail was reached, and the

homeward journey was resumed. I had no hesitancy in speaking now. As my voice in unison with the pistol-like reports of the whip rang out, they showed no more desire for battle, but a desperate resolve to reach home as speedily as possible.

But ere the journey ended, they played me a shabby trick, and in a measure got their revenge on me. At the bottom of the hill, on which the house of this native agent was built, he had dug a trench and there fixed a heavy stockade to break the force of the wild storms that, sweeping over the lake, drifted the snow around his home. This stockade was fifteen or eighteen feet high. The storms had so piled up the snow on the lake side that it was now level with the top; while over the other side there was a drift of only about five or six feet in depth.

There was a regular dog trail around by the gate to the house, but, of course, I knew nothing of this. The dogs knew, however, and were always accustomed to use it. But this night, as though furious and revengeful at the white man who had conquered them, when we arrived within a few yards of the house, instead of taking the usual

IT WAS A WILD, MAD LEAP.

route they dashed up this long packed snowdrift on the lake side carrying me over the high stockade into the drifts beyond. It was a mad leap of over ten feet. Fortunately the snow into which we plunged was deep enough to break the fall, but, as it was, I felt the effects of it for weeks. With a vengeance the dogs struggled out of the snowdrift. Then up the hill they hurried me to the house. Sharp ears had heard our coming and familiar hands grasped the dogs and led them away, while I was, by a half-frightened woman, taken into the mission home among her alarmed little ones, who required any amount of explanation why a paleface had come in that way with their father's dogs.

I was thankful to be under a roof once more, and after a time was able, especially by the presents which I had brought, to make friends of all the household.

The rest of the party arrived during the night. The medicines administered to the sick man proved efficacious and he, at this date, is still alive and vigourous.

III

ROBBER DOGS AND AN INDIAN COUNCIL

THE contrast between the old experienced guides, with whom I made most of my journeys, and the inexperienced Indians, whom I was sometimes obliged to take with me, was very great indeed. The best guides were not always available. They were great hunters and were often away in their distant hunting grounds. They were also in demand by the great Hudson's Bay Company, which required the very best guides for the prosecution of their widely extended fur trade. The result was, that I was sometimes obliged to start with men who knew but very little more of the duties required of them than I did myself.

Such trips would be specially unfortunate, if, as it sometimes happened, I was compelled to make use of these men when various diseases had made sad havoc among my dogs and the survivors had been so

hardly worked and had suffered so much, that it would have been cruelty so soon to put them on the trail again. The result was, that while giving my dogs a rest at times, I had to hire not only incompetent guides, but also trains of native dogs that often sorely tried me.

A queer lot of Indians they were. But I became interested in them as soon as they stated the reason of their coming. They were a deputation from the northwestern side of Lake Winnipeg, and they had been sent to ask me to go over and meet them in council, and advise them, as I had done other Indians who had made treaties with the Government.

The great in-rush of white settlers and adventurers into Manitoba and the Northwest Territories, in the early seventies, greatly troubled the Indians. They feared that in spite of all the fair promises made to them, they were in danger of losing their lands, the hunting-grounds of their forefathers, without a fair compensation. Putting ourselves in their places, we can see that they had much to perplex and trouble them. They used to come to me in their bewilderment and ask me to explain many

of the singular, and to them most incomprehensible, doings of these strange "palefaces." Sometimes to draw them out and hear their quaint way of putting things, I would ask for definite information as to the actions of the "palefaces," who had so sadly unsettled them.

They were not slow to tell me what they had seen, and as I listened I wondered if the busy enterprising white man, as he was rushing hither and thither through that then wild country where the rights of the Indians were still unquestioned, ever knew how often sharp eyes were upon him, behind which was a suspicious red Indian, in whose hands was a trusty gun.

That these red men remained so quiet, both on the prairies and in the forests, considering the numbers of greedy adventurers who invaded their abodes, ere treaties were made with them and their rights assured, redounds very much to their credit.

"We see him," said one, "that paleface with his little pan, and he go up and down our rivers and lakes, and he stop on the shores and he put sand in that pan, and he whirl it round and round so fast that some

of the sand keep flying out with the water. Then when only little left in the bottom of that pan, that man puts it on white paper and he looks at it for some time through little round things he takes out of his pocket. Then he throws it all away and then he tries again, and then he goes somewhere else and tries same as this, and then when night is coming on and he throws his last sand away, he says bad words and goes back to his camp.

"Then some other day another white man comes into our country, and there be three, four of them. And they pitch their tent by the great rocks where there are some lines of white rock mixed with the rest. There some days these men with their hammers and chisels, hammer and break away pieces of this white rock [quartz]. Then they break it up fine and they do many things with it, all very strange to us. Then they try in some more places all around their camp and some even go miles away, looking for this white rock, and they bring to the camp some loads of it on their backs. They then all work at it and when done they throw it all away, and then they

say some more bad words, and then they take down their tent and go somewhere else."

I listened to these and other recitals of their perplexities, and assured them that the Government of the Queen, through the Governor-General, would see that her Indian subjects were honourably dealt with, and that these pushing white men would not be allowed to rob them of their mines, fisheries, forests or waterfalls.

My words were received with great satisfaction, especially when they found out that I had already assisted another tribe in helping them to make an advantageous treaty with the Government.

They were so very importunate that I should come and tell at their council-fire, all these assuring things that I had to promise to make them a speedy visit. They were highly elated, that is for Indians, with the success of their visit, and having received some gifts, they speedily returned to their distant home.

My field of work was already extended over an area equal to all England, and this new place, from which this delegation had

come, was quite beyond what I had considered my field. But the promise had been given and it must be fulfilled.

I had some out-stations on the western side of Lake Winnipeg at that date, and so I resolved to make a tour, which would include all my work, and enable me, at the same time, to meet these disturbed Indians and quiet their fears in reference to their lands.

The distemper had killed off a number of my dogs, and others had suffered severely in a very hard journey just ended; so in hiring my Indian comrades, I not only engaged three who knew that western country, but I also hired three of their dog-trains as well. This gave my own dogs a much-needed rest, but I missed them much before the trip ended.

We carried with us abundant supplies, for we were going into new regions and were none too sure as to the condition or abundance of the food at those places. Reindeer had been killed in goodly numbers that winter, by my Indians, so I had a large bag of venison cooked for this long trip. A two-bushel bag of fat, nutritious buns was also

prepared. These, with the usual supplies of the more substantial food, made us unusually pleased with our outfit.

We left our home very early in the morning and with our fresh dogs made a capital day's run, considering our heavy loads. We made our camp in the forest on the eastern shore of the lake, in the snow where a dense balsam grove afforded us protection from the biting cold wind.

Long ere the stars had faded before the light of the coming day we were on our way. We were now crossing the great lake and were specially anxious to get to the other side ere night should overtake us. So very wide is this great lake, at the place where we were crossing, that it requires many hours of rapid dog travelling to make the journey from shore to shore. About half-way across we struck a little island, on which we found a few dead trees, still standing. We quickly cut down two or three of them and soon had a good fire of burning logs, at which a much enjoyed dinner was prepared and eaten. The journey was then resumed and rapidly did we push on, in our endeavour to reach the western shore in time to make our camp there in the forest

before the darkness fell upon us. To our great disappointment, a wintry haze settled down between us and the distant shore. While we were still able to continue our journey, the Indian attendants became quite bewildered, and missed by some miles, the place at which we wished to strike the land. Darkness fell upon us before the Indian running on ahead was able to announce that we had reached the shore. We found that we had arrived at a place where the bold, high banks rose up perpendicularly from the water, now of course, converted into solid ice.

After some fruitless attempts to find a place where it was possible to clamber up with our dog trains into the forest above, we gave up the prospect of having a decent camp in the woods that night and began making what preparations we could to spend the night there on the ice. Fortunately for us, the banks were of clay, and the fierce storms of many summers had so eaten into them, that many trees, growing on the top, had had the soil so washed away from the roots that they had fallen headlong to the shore beneath. Here amidst the snowdrifts that had accumulated and nearly

buried these fallen trees out of sight, we vigourously plied our axes and cut out a quantity of logs and branches with which to make a fire.

In order to make a fire on the ice, that will continue burning long enough for the cooking of a supper, and the thawing out of frozen fish for our dogs, it is necessary first to lay a foundation of logs, the greener and the more difficult to burn the better, on which the actual fire can be built. The supply of wood was limited, or rather very difficult to obtain, so buried was it in the snow.

We succeeded at last, however, even if we had no light but the stars, and they, owing to the haze, were far from being as brilliant as usual. When at length our fire was brightly blazing out there on the ice, it was a picturesque sight. But there was no time for mere sentiment, as we knew full well that the instant the fire burnt down through its foundation of logs, the steam from the melting ice would extinguish it. Hence everybody was busy and no time was lost in preparing our supper or thawing the fish for the dogs. Everything went off to our satisfaction. Some of the Indians, refreshed by their suppers, hurried off, and by the light

A HALF DOZEN WILD LOOKING INDIANS RUSHED INTO OUR MIDST.

of the still blazing fire cut a fresh supply of wood, including a quantity of green logs for a new foundation. This gave us the means for a brilliant fire with which to prepare our beds for a few hours' needed sleep and rest on the ice.

Suddenly our pleasant anticipations of a quiet, restful night, which we much needed, were rudely scattered to the winds. Rushing into our midst without the slightest intimation of their approach, there appeared half a dozen wild looking Indians accompanied by over a dozen of vicious, half-starved Huskie dogs. The men greeted us most effusively, which was a sign that they were thinking of the big supper they expected us to give them. The wolfish dogs, however, did not even have the politeness to greet us, but after a sudden fierce attack upon my hired dogs, whom they drove away from the fire, they at once set upon and began to devour everything eatable, in which they could fasten their teeth. My Indians were indignant, and instantly seizing their whips and firebrands, they vigourously assailed these wolfish dogs and at length succeeded in driving them a few yards from the fire. We saw that we were in for a miser-

able night, with varied experiences that would be anything but pleasant.

While two of the men with whips and clubs kept the invading Eskimo beasts out of the camp, with my other Indian I chatted with these visiting strangers. They told me that they had come from the Cumberland district to fish through the ice on Lake Winnipeg, and hunt what game they could find in the forests on the shore. They said that they had had very little success and were very hungry.

I gave them a liberal supply of food and a package of tea, and after a long chat politely requested them to return to their own camp, which was some distance up the coast, and from which they had seen our campfire. Its brightness was the cause of this visit. In vain my protestations and kindly request for their departure! The fact of our being tired and weary and wanting the night's rest never seemed to have entered into their minds. What they said was:

"We are so glad to have met the 'black coat' the friend of the Indian, that we must stay with him as long as we can."

So they set to work, and with my kettles cooked the food which I had given them.

Seeing that it was impossible to get rid of them, I held a brief consultation with my men as to the best manner of saving our supplies from that pack of cunning rascals. How innocent they looked, sitting out there bunched together on the ice, and just waiting until we would go to sleep. Two of the men turned up the sleds, and, sleeping between them and their loads, they managed to get through the night with but the loss of a few fish and the cutting of numerous deer skin thongs, to which the loads are tied on the sleds.

My guide and myself took charge of the bag of cooked supplies and placed them under the outer coverings of our beds, which were unrolled and arranged for us on the ice. As on other occasions, under almost similar circumstances, I placed close at hand a number of sticks which I could use as clubs, as well as my heavy dog-whip.

Our Indian visitors, at length seeing that we were anxious to get some sleep, left us. But not so their dogs. Vainly my men tried to drive the half-starved brutes after their masters. They cared not for the calls sounding in front of them, or the clubs and execrations hurled at them in the rear.

It was now long after midnight. Our fires in several places had burnt down through their log foundations, and the hissing steam from the melting ice below gradually extinguished the flames, that were, on the higher places, bravely striving to keep up their brightness.

Darkness at length settled upon us and soon the fun began. In spite of our watchfulness those Eskimo dogs proved too much for us. They walked over us; they sat down upon us; they fought across us. Waking up, I was as though I had had the night-mare. We threw our clubs at them; we thrashed them with our whips; we chased them far out on the lake, but they were back about as soon as we were. We thought we were good watchmen and that at least some of us were on the alert all the time. But it was all in vain. Those dogs got our venison and buns and many other things. One of them ate several feet off the end of one of the heavy whip-lashes, and another devoured or carried off the moccasins of one of the men who had put them to dry when the fire was bright, and had forgotten to remove them when the flame was suddenly smothered by the steam. We were

a demoralized lot of travellers when the first grey shadows of morning came the next day. My men called in their timid dogs from the distance, and we were grateful that none of them had been devoured. We harnessed them up, tied on our loads—or what was left of them—and departed with a firm resolve that, if possible, in the future we would try to reach a forest camp, where, if again assailed by such dogs as these, that had so over-matched us, we would at least have the trees in which we could hang up our supplies, and if necessary climb into ourselves.

With supplies very much diminished, our enthusiasm cooled, and our conceit below zero, as regards ability to overmatch Huskie dogs, we proceeded on our way. We were a quiet party—only one question that I can remember, being asked that day. It was something about like this:

"If the Evil One should come to trouble us in the form of an animal, which one would it likely be?"

The guide said, "Huskie;" and we all affirmatively chorused, "Che-ka-ma."

Towards night we reached one of our distant outposts. Here we exchanged a few

pounds of tea for some fish and rabbits, and I lived on them, in place of the supplies the native dogs had appropriated to themselves. After some days' visit here, the journey was resumed and, after varied experience, generally more annoying than pleasant, with these hired dogs, on the day appointed we reached the village of the Indians with whom the council was to be held.

The natives who had visited me had evidently returned with glowing accounts of their interview. We found the people in a very excited condition and eager to hear what the "blackcoat" had to say to them on this all-important question.

They gave us a salute from all of their guns that were available, and freely offered us the pipe from their own mouths. Never having acquired the "fumigatory art," I was obliged to transfer the calumets to my men, and have them do all of the smoking expected of me, as by proxy. Singular to relate, this my men were ever willing and even anxious to do for me.

Our first important duties after the noisy welcomes were over and the pipes had been duly passed around, was to secure our sleds with their important loads. My Indian

drivers securely fastened their dogs with a stick and two thongs in the manner described elsewhere. The village was so infested with hungry looking dogs, that we decided our only safe way was to put our sleds and loads not needed upon an empty fish staging at least eight feet above the ground. Here they were fortunately safe.

The great council was not held until all had returned to their wigwams and had their evening meal. Then the important gathering took place. These Indians had built a log council house which would hold several hundred people. When I was escorted into it, the sight was picturesque in the extreme. Near the centre on a raised platform of earth the council fire was burning. Grouped around it were the chiefs and principal men of that band of Indians, as well as some distinguished visitors from other places, who had come for information on this important question, which was agitating the minds of many Indians of the different tribes. All had brought out their finest Indian costumes and many were gorgeously arrayed.

The calumet, or pipe of peace, was then lit with a good deal of ceremony. After be-

ing passed around and a whiff or two drawn by them all, it was returned to the principal chief, who handed it to his pipe-bearer. Then the speech-making began and lasted for several hours. Indians are natural orators. They have a readiness of utterance, a fluency of words, a play of fancy and a richness of illustration, that is, at times, very remarkable. Give an Indian orator a theme in which he is interested and time to meditate upon it, and he will make a speech that many an orator in highly civilized lands might envy but could seldom equal.

Indians are very courteous as well as dignified in debate. A speaker is never interrupted while giving his address. To his remarks all give the most earnest attention, no matter how much their views may differ from his, or how irritating they may seem to a white man. Such a thing as abruptly interrupting the speaker in the midst of his oration is unknown.

Another remarkable fact is the tenacity of their memories and the ability of a speaker to reply to the address of an opponent. Such a thing as taking notes is unknown among them, and hence their good

memories have to be depended upon and are very rarely questioned.

In this council which we visited, there were many divergent views as to the character of the demands to be made on the Government for the surrender of their lands. One very amusing request, which at first was urged as an essential requisite in return for ceding away their country, was that every one of them should be permitted to ride free on the "smoke-waggons," which the palefaces would after awhile be running through their country. They seemed quite glum and disappointed when I candidly told them that this favour would not be granted to them. I told them that, much as it cost us to buy dogs and run dog trains, it would cost the white men so much more to run these railroads, that everybody, with perhaps the exception of the head chiefs, when they went to meet the great Governor on council business, would have to pay for the pleasure of riding. They were still very loath to surrender this point, on which they had evidently set their hearts.

In the discussion which followed I had to explain that in no lands where railroads

were running, were these favours granted to the people, and appealing to the chiefs, I tried to show them what an injury it would be to them as a community, when by and by settled on their reserves, if, say, when they ought to be planting potatoes or sewing their grain, they were off riding through the country on these railroads. Why, they would soon be starving for food. This argument and the fact that, in all probability, the chiefs themselves would have "passes," for their business visits to the Governor, brought them over to my side of thinking, and so from them we had some most amusing impromptu orations on the dire disaster that might occur at critical times, because the people were off gadding about the country, instead of being at home minding their own business.

About midnight the council ended, after the calumet had made its rounds again, and words of thanks had been uttered to the white brother: "who," they said, "had come so far to quiet their minds, and whose heart was so good towards them." Then the Indians, one after another, withdrew, and with my men I was left alone in the council house. Near the smouldering embers of the

council fire, my bed was unrolled and prepared for me. My travelling companions lay down near me in their rabbit-skin blankets, and soon we were fast asleep. The next day we resumed our journey, and after making a few visits to other places, we reached our home without any special adventure.

The next year, when the Government officials met these Indians, for the purpose of making a treaty with them, they were agreeably surprised and delighted with the promptness and intelligence with which the Indians discussed the various provisions of the treaty being made with them. They were also surprised that these Indians did not make a stubborn demand for free rides for every one of them in the "smoke-waggons." This was so remarkable in contrast to the actions of Indians in other places that some of the white Commissioners could not but ask the reason of the moderation of their demands.

"Oh," they said; "that is all right. We talked that out at our big council with a 'black-coat,' and we there found that it would not do to have the people riding about the country, when they ought to be home looking after their affairs."

IV

JACK, THE GIANT ST. BERNARD

"A POOR Missionary's dog; please don't steal him."

This was what was engraved on the brass plate that was securely fastened to the collar-like strap that was on his neck. He was a magnificent St. Bernard dog, and his name was Jack. For more than a month he had been *en route,* and during that time, in various styles of conveyances, he had travelled over three thousand miles. He had been accompanied by a very beautiful thoroughbred Newfoundland dog, whose name was Cuffy. They were both the gift of the Hon. Senator Sanford, of Hamilton, Ontario.

Sick and disgusted with the native Eskimo and mongrel dogs of that Northland, with their many shortcomings and wretched tricks, I had written out to friends in civilization to come to my rescue by securing for me some of the large, valuable dogs that

EGERTON R. YOUNG AND JACK.

friends were merely keeping for pleasure. These would be of great service to me in the work which necessitated my journeying some thousands of miles every winter with my dog trains. My appeals caused a great deal of merriment at the time, so unique did they appear to some. A few good friends who could appreciate the situation responded so kindly and generously that it was not long ere I had the finest dogs in all that great country.

With them it was a very great pleasure to travel. Possessing all the good qualities of the Eskimo dogs and yet none of their thievish habits, I could rely on them in any emergency, knowing full well that they would do, without fail, everything that could, with reason, be expected from dogs. Including young dogs, I often had as many as thirty in my possession at the same time. This may seem a large number for a missionary to have had, but it must be remembered that not only did I generally require four trains for efficient work when on my long winter journeys, but, in addition, there were duties at the home Mission that required the services of generally a couple of strong trains.

My good wife was also the owner of a capital train, that was generally kept well employed, under the charge of an efficient driver, in taking her around, as, on her missions of comfort and helpfulness, she visited the wigwams and other lowly homes of the Indians, where sickness prevailed. All the wood, some winters, required for the great stoves in the church, school house, and Mission home, was dragged from the adjacent forests by my dog trains. In addition to this, after I had been in the country some time, I kept several cows, and for three years tried the risky experiment of keeping a couple of horses in those high latitudes. Of course, I required a large quantity of hay. All this, which had been cut and dried during the short summer months, in distant marshy places and old dried-up beaver meadows, was dragged home to my stables by the dogs on specially prepared sleds. It will thus be seen how essential for efficient work good dogs would be, and so I welcomed the coming of Jack and Cuffy with great anticipation and delight, and never once did either of them fail or disappoint me.

Jack, when he reached his prime, was thirty-three inches high at the fore-shoulder.

His weight averaged from one hundred and eighty to two hundred pounds. Like all my dogs, his weight was at the lowest point when we returned from our long toilsome trips, often of weeks' duration. I did not have the slightest trouble in breaking him into his work in the harness. A few kind words and a little patience, and from that hour no better dog was ever harnessed. The only battles I ever had with him were about Cuffy, his companion. These will be described later.

Jack's place was second dog in the train. He could lead splendidly and would respond to the various calls as promptly as a well trained horse does to the reins, but he was of too affectionate a nature, and he and his master were on too intimate terms of friendship, for him to be assigned to the post of leadership if the trail on which we were going were a dangerous one, and Jack became possessed with the idea that his beloved master was running any risk of disaster or peril. In the very worst spots, he would sometimes suddenly whirl round with the whole train, and with a rush, would come to the rear of the sled, where I was riding, and shoving his great face in mine,

would as well as any dog could put it, say: "Master, this is a very risky place, and so I have just come back for a minute to see if you are all right."

This, of course, was very kind and thoughtful on the part of Jack, but he was only a dog, and so did not realize that in such erratic movements he was, while showing his solicitude for his master, very much adding to the risks that were being run. So after some amusing, and two or three very risky adventures, Jack was relegated to the place of the second dog in the train. Cuffy had the place behind him, while a powerful and well trained dog had the dangerous and responsible position of sleigh dog. The sleigh dog is more liable to accident and injury than any other dog in the train. His quick eye and active movements to the right or to the left, in the narrow crooked trail, must ever guard the sleigh from striking against the trees, which at times are so numerous and so provokingly in the way. Then if the three dogs in front of him have in their foolishness dashed on between two trees growing so closely together, that it is doubtful if there is room for the sleigh to pass through without injury, it is the duty

of this last dog in the train to so quickly stop and throw himself back, that the three dogs ahead of him are as suddenly brought to a standstill as though pulled up with a lasso. So well trained and intelligent are some of these sleigh dogs, in this work, that it seems as though they can judge within a very few inches whether the narrow passage is sufficiently wide for the sleigh, for which they well know they are held responsible, to pass through.

The marvellous leader of my own favourite train was Voyageur, a great one-eyed dog of unclassed breed, morose and unsociable, but the peerless leader for a number of years. Of him I will have something to say of interest in another place.

Distempers and other diseases played sad havoc at times among the dogs. Some years at least a third of my trained dogs would be thus cut off. So it was always necessary to have a number of young ones coming to full size, to take the places of those that had fallen. The work of breaking in these new dogs was sometimes a very difficult task. While there were those, like Jack and Cuffy, that took naturally and quickly to the work, there were others that offered the most des-

perate and stubborn resistance ere they surrendered and became serviceable. In the work of breaking in obstinate young dogs, I found that Jack was my best assistant. He delighted in the work, and it was simply marvellous at times to see the cleverness and thoroughness with which he seconded my efforts. The plan I generally adopted in breaking in a big, stubborn young dog, was to harness him up in a train with three strong, well trained ones in front of him and Jack in harness behind him. When "Marche!", the word for "Go!", was shouted, the old dogs would, of course, at once spring to advance. This the new dog would generally attempt to prevent, by stubbornly balking. Most desperately would he exert all of his strength to hold his ground against the efforts of the dogs in front. This was Jack's opportunity to show what he could do in speedily bringing the young dog to his senses.

"Go for him, Jack," was all I had to say. With a rush and a roar Jack would spring at the stubborn dog, and with more noise and furor than actual biting, he would so frighten the now terrified young animal, that he was glad to spring to his feet and

make the most desperate effort to get beyond the reach of the enormous dog that was making it so lively in his rear. As long as the youngster kept going on straight in the trail, Jack did not molest him, but it often happened that a stubborn dog hated to yield quickly, and so tried various other tricks. One was to try to run ahead of the steady dogs in front. This Jack easily prevented. Sometimes he would rush forward, and suddenly seizing the transgressor by a hind leg or his tail, would speedily drag him back into his place. At other times he would throw himself back with such force that the delinquent was speedily jerked back into line. Thus every trick or artifice of the young dog would be so promptly met and defeated that it was not long ere the training lessons were completely learned, and the young dog was thoroughly fitted for his work.

It was highly amusing to watch Jack's kindly patronising way towards these dogs, as soon as they were conquered and then let out of their harness. While they were being broken in, he had appeared to be the personification of fierceness and anger; now, however, that they had surrendered, in dog-like

fashion he licked their faces and bruises and was effusively affectionate in his demeanour towards them. Some of them were, at first, not much inclined to receive these friendly advances, but eventually, perhaps after he had fought a battle or two in their defence, they came to be very much attached to him as their friend, while they never questioned his title as their master in the pack, no matter of how many great dogs it consisted.

Jack was very helpful to us in the cold wintry mornings in the camps, when we determined to resume our journey long before daylight. It was very provoking when we ascertained that some of the dogs could not be found. Cunning white ones were lying somewhere invisible in the snow, and would not respond to the calls of their names, no matter how endearingly bawled out. Others, of a darker hue, well knowing that their colour would betray them if they remained in their nests in the pure white snow, had, the instant that they noticed any movement at the camp, noiselessly skulked away into the darkness of the dense balsam trees, and there were equally deaf to the calling of their names, no matter how well garnished with affixes or prefixes. These

skulking tricks were most annoying, in addition to the long delays they sometimes occasioned. It was a very great satisfaction to my Indian drivers when Jack at length grasped the situation and proved himself equal to any two of the men in hunting down and promptly bringing in the miserable offenders.

Quite fairly Jack was a privileged character among the dogs, for he and Cuffy always slept close to me in the camp, on the outside of my robes. When the men began harnessing up their trains, it was soon seen which dogs were missing. An honest effort was generally made by the men to capture them, before they would appeal to me for Jack to come to their help. When, however, it was seen that some were still undiscovered, Jack was speedily set to work. All I had to do was to show him one of the empty collars, and to tell him to go and find the dog that had the head that ought to be in it. One good smell at it was all that he required, and then he was off with a rush. Round and round the camp he would go, until he struck the trail of the dog for which he was searching. When this was found a joyous bark gave us the news that he was on

the right scent, and it would not be long before the truant dog would be driven into the camp. Jack was given a few minutes to rest, during which he was well praised for his success. Then another empty collar was shown him and again he was off. Sometimes an ugly dog would show fight, but he never did it the second time, so severe would be the shaking that Jack would give him. Thus, one by one, the skulkers would be run in until the trains were full and the day's journey could be begun.

As Jack and Cuffy were the two dogs that were allowed to share our home life with us, and as our guardians slept inside of the house every night, when not away on long winter trips, it was but right that they should be better cared for than those dogs that were not accustomed to the warmth of the house. So every night, after my camp bed was made and I was snugly tucked in by my loyal and most attentive Indians, Jack quickly stretched out his great body at my back, while Cuffy preferred to cuddle down on the robes at my feet. Doubtless she selected this place as generally a great blazing fire was burning not far distant from my feet, and she was anxious to enjoy its

warmth as long as it continued. Next to me on the other side from Jack, my guide and the Indian dog drivers would cuddle down under their warm rabbit-skin robes, and sleep very soundly, although at times the nights were so bitterly cold that I used to think that I was really freezing to death.

We occasionally allowed some of the younger well-behaved dogs to sleep at the feet of or around the Indians, but as a rule they had to dig holes in the snow and sleep there as best they could. It was a queer fact that they would not sleep together and thus aid in keeping each other warm. Even Jack and Cuffy, although very fond of each other, never cared to sleep near to each other.

Jack thoroughly enjoyed the holidays, which were absolutely necessary between the long winter journeys which were being made to various places, so distant and remote, in the different parts of that vast region of country. While at his work, he never would show any signs of weariness or discouragement. To the very last hour, no matter how fierce the blizzards or how wretched the trails, his head was up and his traces were taut. Other dogs might and

often did become discouraged, and by both voice and whip had to be urged on in the laborious toil, but Jack was game to the end of the journey. However, when the work was done and he was once more stretched out on the wolf-skin rug in the study in the Mission home, he seemed to know that he had well earned his rest and most thoroughly did he enjoy it. For three or four days he just wanted to be severely let alone; after that he was himself again, ready to romp with the little ones, to whom he was most loyally attached, or to tease the Indian servant girl in the kitchen, in ways that at times nearly drove her distracted, but which provoked everybody else to laughter. In various ways he was useful about the house. When coming in after a heavy day's work, footsore and tired, all I had to do was to shout out: "Slippers!" At once Jack understood and immediately the search for the slippers began. As sometimes, to try his skill, they had purposely been hid, it was amusing to see how diligently he searched every room in the house until he found them. The longer the search, the greater seemed the pride with which he proudly brought them to me. One day when

he was out in another room, while I was in my study, I called out:

"Slippers, slippers!" Jack at once began his usual search. He hunted every room. He bothered the women folks until they had to open closets and drawers for him. Failing completely, at length he came into the study, as it were to report his want of success. At once his quick eyes detected the long looked for slippers on my feet. He gave me a look which, if it had been on a human face, would have been called one of disgust. Then turning round he haughtily left the room and did not return to it again that day. After that, when I called "Slippers," while he was too loyal to disobey, he always came at once to the study and examined my feet for the called-for articles. If they were there he would give me a look that seemed to say:

"It is a pity that my master is becoming so absent-minded."

No shouting of slippers would cause him to pay the slightest attention during the rest of that day.

V

JACK. AND MANY THINGS CONCERNING HIM

JACK'S household duties were by no means confined to hunting slippers. While he and Cuffy were always allowed to come into the house, it was well understood by him that he was ever to be on the watch that no other dogs, except by special permission, were to be allowed to cross the threshold. He was also allowed to go to church, but woe to the Indian dog that dared to enter the door. He very seldom tried it a second time.

In that northern country, in the midst of its great forests, wood was used alone as fuel. And as the winters were seven or eight months long, we used a great deal of it. Then, as it was generally of a light flashy kind, it was quickly consumed in our great iron box stoves. The result was that the large wood-boxes in the houses had to be frequently filled from the great piles that were cut outside. This work of carrying in

wood was quite laborious when it fell to the lot of the servant girl, who had to do it if no men were around. One day, when the work had been felt to be specially burdensome, it was suggested that perhaps Jack could be induced to add this accomplishment to his many other clever attainments. At once the effort was made. A kind of bee was organised, and amidst laughter and fun, a number of the family were all busily engaged in carrying in wood. Jack always loved to be in every frolic, and so, of course, he was invited to take part in this one. Proudly did he take in his mouth the billet of wood assigned to him and at once carry it into the kitchen and place it in the wood-box as deftly as did the others. It was not long before he understood the work perfectly and became such an adept at it that it was not necessary for any one to be with him when thus employed. When the supply of wood ran low, all that was required was for some member of the family to say: "I wonder if that big lazy dog knows that the wood-box is empty?"

This was all that would be said. At once Jack was at work. He would first open the kitchen door and fasten it open. Then he

industriously worked away, carrying in stick after stick, until told that there was enough. He was very proud and happy when told that he had done well. It was no easy task, as the sticks of wood were at least three feet long and each weighed several pounds.

Jack soon learned that we considered this one of his clever accomplishments, and so when he wished to especially show off or win some extra compliments or favours he industriously went to work carrying in wood.

There was hardly a long winter journey taken but Jack gave us something to laugh at, or caused us to be intensely interested in some new exhibition of his sagacity or skill. My Indian drivers all learned to love him for his marvellous strength and staying powers. Still it was evident that they were a little afraid of him, on account of his enormous size. Only once did I ever see an Indian driver lift a whip, as though to strike him. The blow never fell. Jack saw the movement, and although he was the second dog in the train, he whirled round so suddenly on the man, dragging Koona the leader with him, that that Indian had no

more relish for driving the missionary's train that day.

He gave us a great fright, and then a good laugh, one bitterly cold day by his falling through the thin ice in a great crack on Lake Winnipeg. During the previous night, as we lay in our camp in the snow, in the woods on the shore, we were frequently disturbed by the loud booming reports, like distant thunder or heavy artillery. In response to my inquiries from my Indian comrades, all the answer I received was the laconic: "Ice cracking, big cold, open places, much danger, take care."

This, when amplified, means that although the ice is several feet thick, yet when the cold reaches a certain intensity, so great is the contraction that the ice bursts with tremendous suddenness and power, so that great openings or cracks, as they are called, are formed which are often many miles in length, but generally only a few feet in width. To the travellers hurrying on, especially in the gloom of night, these cracks are very dangerous, as the water at once rushes up even with the ice, and some time must elapse ere it freezes sufficiently hard to support any hunter or traveller who may

happen to come along. What makes it the more dangerous is the fact that there is not the slightest evidence of its existence, until the unfortunate traveller is about falling into it. The result is there are some narrow escapes and, at times, some very serious accidents. One night I had taken the place of my guide, who had so badly injured his knee that he was unable to do his work.

While I was running on ahead of my trains, facing towards the North Star, I happened to glance down at the glassy surface of the frozen lake, over which we were now rapidly travelling. At once, I was almost startled by the vividness of the reflection of the stars, in what at first seemed to be the ice, but a few yards in front of me. On I hurried, and just as I was about to plunge into it, to my horror I saw that it was open water! Suddenly stopping myself, I whirled round and shouted, "Chasquaw!" to my dogs and Indians, who were close at my heels. It was a wonder, even to the old experienced Indians, how I had escaped. There was not the least coating of ice on the placid water, that here stretched out for unknown miles each side of us and was some yards in width before us. It was

very evident that it had burst open within an hour or two at the most. We had to make a long detour ere we found a place where the crack was narrow enough to let us cross and the journey could be resumed.

On another occasion, we had a queer adventure where the ice was thin and Jack, breaking through, had a narrow escape. We were travelling on Lake Winnipeg and it was a bitterly cold day. During the previous night, we had heard enough booming on the great icy expanse to put us on our guard against these great cracks and openings, but all precautions avail but little when these openings freeze over and the drifting snow, swirling along, makes the ice of half an inch or so look exactly like that which is six feet thick. On this occasion, the roguish Koona was the leader of my train. Jack was in the second place, while Cuffy and Cæsar were behind. The guide, that morning was a light-footed fellow who, Indian-like, could run easily over ice so thin that no ordinary white man would dare to think of following. While speeding on, we came to one of these cracks, that must have opened up not many hours before. The ice had formed upon it with sufficient strength

to allow the guide, who was several hundred yards ahead of me, to cross over it in safety. When my train reached it, the new ice held until Koona had just barely reached the firm old ice on the other side. At that instant it broke under Jack, and down he went in the cold water. Poor fellow! he was completely submerged, and although but for an instant, it was quite bath enough under such a temperature. It was astonishing to see how well the dogs knew how to act in such an emergency. Koona held on to his grip on the ice, with all the strength he had, while the dogs behind Jack at once pulled back, as well as their collars and traces would allow. The result was, these taut traces before and behind Jack kept him well up in the water.

Speedily we moved to get him out without permitting any other dogs to fall in. A sled was at once unloaded and unfastened. This the cautious Indians shoved out on the unbroken ice at one side of Jack, taking care that one end of it reached to the firm ice in front, while the rear end was on old ice sufficiently firm to keep it from breaking through. Then two of the Indians cautiously went out on this improvised bridge,

and seizing hold of the traces in front and rear, they soon had the shivering dog up on the sled between them. Carefully were Cuffy and Cæsar, the two dogs behind Jack, guided over on the same bridge without any mishap. Hanging on to the cariole to which they were attached, I safely followed, and in like manner all of our party crossed. Jack was in a deplorable condition. His glossy coat, usually of inky blackness, was now turning to snowy whiteness, as Jack Frost speedily began to exert his terrible power. We were at least twelve miles from shore, and of course nothing could be done out there on the ice for the noble fellow, that so pitifully yet mutely looked to me for help.

"For the shore," was the cry, "and a new flannel shirt to the Indian who can get there before the Ookemou (master) and have a fire burning at which the ice can be quickly melted from poor shivering Jack."

At once we were off. A new flannel shirt is a great thing to an Indian, and so whips were out, and their pistol-like reports rang out in unison with the drivers' cheery calls to their different trains. At first Jack, so hampered by the weight of his icy load, seemed dazed and discouraged; then he

roused himself up and appeared to realise that his life depended upon his quickly getting to that distant shore, and so he sprang to his work with an energy that won the admiration of us all. He seemed to take the rest of his train, as well as the cariole, and his master, in that race for his life. No other train was within a half of a mile, when we dashed up from the lake into the welcome forest, and so no shirt was won that day.

As rapidly as possible our axes were at work, and as one Indian after another arrived, dry dead trees were quickly cut down and a good fire was soon burning on the spot, from which the snow had been cleared away. Before this bright fire a buffalo robe was thrown down, and Jack, still encased in ice, and about as white as the spotless Koona, was placed upon it. I had feared that it would require not less than two of us to hold him near enough to the fire, in order that the ice might be speedily thawed off.

When the temperature is forty or fifty below zero out in the open air, there is not much thawing power, except very near to the blaze, and most dogs have a very

decided objection to being found so close, where there is any danger of their whiskers being singed. So I naturally feared trouble, and perhaps failure in my efforts to save my noble dog. Very quickly however were our fears turned into laughter, for Jack at once displayed an intelligence and cleverness that simply amazed us all, wise as we all knew him to be, for no sooner did he understand that that buffalo robe and fire had been designed for him, than he at once proceeded to make the very best possible use of both. At first he moved around on all of his feet, keeping different parts of his body as near to the fire as he could without burning himself. After a while he seemed to think that this was not satisfactory, and so he steadied himself up on his hind legs, and there, like a great dancing bear, he kept jumping around before the fierce fire, turning every part of himself to the bright, warm flames.

Under the power of the fierce heat, the great chunks of ice speedily melted and ran down his hind legs on to the robe. This water bothered him at first, but he alertly moved to dryer places, keeping, however, as close to the fire as possible. From the

other side of the fire, the Indians and myself watched his marvellous movements. To say that we laughed until we cried, is putting it very mildly. But little cared Jack for our laughter. It was serious business with him, and seriously and thoroughly did he attend to it, until every bit of the ice was melted, and all that cold water was dried off from his now glossy coat. During all the time he had been attending to this work, not once had he condescended to notice any one of us, or even apparently to look at us. And of course we were so pleased to see him so able to do the work without us that we took very good care not to bother him in any way. When he was satisfied himself, that he was all right, we speedily harnessed him again in his place, and the journey was resumed. Jack was none the worse for this ducking, but he was ever afterward a little cautious where the ice seemed insecure. This adventure, with Jack's marvellous cleverness in hopping around that fire in the woods to melt off that icy coat of mail and so thoroughly dry himself, was one of the principal camp fire stories among the Indians for many a year.

JUMPING AROUND THE FIRE LIKE
A DANCING BEAR.

The frequent changing of the maids in the kitchen, was always a matter of perplexity to Jack. The dog was suspicious of these unknown Indian girls coming in, and so familiarly handling the various utensils of their work. Six months was about all they generally remained with us, as in that time they were, if not before, married off to ambitious young bachelor Indians, who were always most anxious to secure, as their wives, the girls who had been trained by the missionary's wife. So Jack had to be warned to be on his good behaviour and permit these new comers to have the freedom of the house. It was interesting to see how he at first watched them and speedily found out where it was possible for him to have some quiet fun at their expense. If a girl were specially anxious to keep the doors shut, Jack took great delight in frequently opening them. This he would persist in doing until complaints were lodged against him and he had to be well scolded for his conduct.

One summer we had a fat, good-natured Indian servant girl, whom we called Mary. Jack, at first could not find any way by which he could annoy her. She treated him

with absolute indifference and was not in the least afraid of him. This seemed to humiliate him, as most of the other girls had stood in such awe of the gigantic fellow that they had given way to him in everything. Mary however did nothing of the kind. She would shout, "Get out of my way!" as quickly to his mightiness as she would to the smallest dog on the place. This very much offended Jack, but he dared not retaliate, even with a growl. Mary had one weakness, and after a while Jack found it out. It was the spotless whiteness of her kitchen floor. Mrs. Young had promised some extra reward to Mary, if she kept her kitchen neat and clean. So anxious was the girl to win this gift, as well as the approval of her mistress, that it seemed as though she spent all the time she could spare from other duties in scrubbing that kitchen floor. In some way, utterly beyond our ken, Jack discovered this, and perhaps humiliated by the fact that Mary had come out best in some schemes he had already tried, he seemed to take the greatest delight in either marching in with his feet as dirty as he could make them, or with his great body dripping wet from a plunge in the lake.

Of course the clean floor was quickly ruined, much to Mary's disgust and Jack's delight.

At other times, when Jack noticed that Mary was about to commence scrubbing the floor, he would deliberately stretch himself out on it, and quietly resist any attempt, on her part, to get him to move. In vain would she feed the other dogs, or by loud calls get them excited and barking furiously outside. Jack had been fooled once or twice in this way, and so now he resisted all her schemes to make him move. Once, when she did, by some clever trick, get him out, she fastened the door so securely that all his rattling of the latch availed him nothing. Getting discouraged in his efforts to open the door in the usual way, he went to the wood-pile, and seizing a big billet in his mouth he came, and so pounded the door with it, that Mary, seeing that there was imminent danger of the panel being broken in, was obliged to open the door and let him in.

Jack marched proudly in with the stick of wood in his mouth. When he had deposited it in the wood-box, he coolly stretched himself out on the spot where he would be the biggest nuisance. Poor Mary

could stand it no longer. Generally she had rather enjoyed pitting her wits against him and had made but few complaints. However, this trick of Jack's in pounding against the door was too much for her patience, and so Mary, leaving the big fellow stretched out on her kitchen floor, marched into my study, and in vigourous, picturesque language, in her native Cree, told us of the tricks and schemes of that Jack to annoy her and hinder her in her work. Of course, when he had gone thus far, he must be reproved and stopped. In doing it we used Jack's love for our little ones to accomplish the object. Jack's love and loyalty and obedience to Sagastaookemou, as the Indians loved to call the bright little four-year-old boy in our home, was thorough and complete. The slightest wish of the little lad was law to Jack. Here, on this occasion, it was tested. As soon as Mary had finished her complaints, I turned to the little fellow, who was busy playing with some toys, and said to him, "Eddy, go and tell that naughty Jack that he must stop teasing Mary. Tell him his place is not in the kitchen and that he must keep out of it."

Eddy had listened to Mary's story and

had apparently understood it well enough to feel that Jack was in the wrong, and so he gallantly came to the rescue. Away he marched with Mary, while the rest of us, now interested in the matter, followed in the rear to see how the thing would turn out. While we remained in the room adjoining the kitchen, and out of sight of Jack, Eddy and Mary went on into the kitchen, leaving the door open behind them. Thus we distinctly heard what the boy said. Marching up to Jack, where he was still sprawled out on the floor, and speaking with the authority of a king, he said as he seized him by one of his ears; "I am ashamed of you, Jack. You naughty dog, teasing Mary like this. So you won't let her wash her kitchen, you naughty dog! Get up!" Jack at once obeyed the child and was thus led by his ear into the study. Here the child gave him another lecture on the naughtiness of his conduct, ending up by saying, "Now, Jack, you keep out of the kitchen." And to a remarkable degree this order was obeyed.

VI

JACK TRIUMPHANT IN THE BLIZZARD

"I'LL never see my mother again and you will never see your wife and little ones!"

Such was the pathetic cry of a fine young Indian lad when he and I found ourselves lost in a blizzard storm out on Lake Winnipeg, one wild fierce wintry day. We had started away from our home several days before this, on a winter trip of several hundreds of miles. We were each driving a splendid train of dogs. We had no guide or experienced Indian attendant. It was a risky experiment we were making but I did not see my way clear to do otherwise.

The fact was, word had come from headquarters that there would be no appropriations for trips to outside pagan Indians that year. That meant that I was to remain at ease in my quiet little cosy home and confine my work and toil to one or two bands of Indians, all of whom were about Chris-

tianized, while the poor uncivilized pagan wanderers in their lonely hunting grounds, far away in the wilderness, were to be again left neglected and forsaken. This I could not stand. I had become deeply attached to these far-off Indians, whom I had generally managed to visit twice a year, once in summer in my canoe, and once in winter with my dog trains. So grateful had they been and so cordially had they received the Gospel, that I resolved that as far as it was in my power I would take the risks, and at any sacrifice keep up the work. So this was the situation. Without any experienced guide for no money had come for the pay of one, here I was with no companion but a young Indian, and we two caught out in a blizzard far away from land on great Lake Winnipeg.

As long as the weather had kept favourable we had succeeded in making good progress, and began to think that we were pretty good travellers. We struck the different headlands, and succeeded in reaching well-known camping spots. There being only the two of us, the work of preparing the winter camp and cutting sufficient wood for the necessary fuel, together with all the

other camp labours, made it very hard on us. However we were both enthusiastic over our work, and so we persevered and did not fare so badly. We each had a train of splendid dogs. With the exception of the leader of my train, all of our dogs were St. Bernards or Newfoundlands. This leader of my train was called Koona, which is the Indian name for flour. He was well named, for he was white as the driven snow. He was well trained and did not require a runner ahead of him, as many dogs do. He thoroughly understood the meanings of the different words used in dog driving and would as promptly respond to them as a well trained horse answers to the rein. He had been so severely punished during his breaking in that he was timid about acting on his own responsibility.

As our supply of wood had been rather limited we started one morning very early, on what we had hoped would have been a successful day's run of about sixty miles. Our camp, which had been only a hole dug in the snow, had been far from comfortable, and so we were not very sorry to be once more on the way. For a time, first by starlight and then by the light of a brilliant

morning, we sped on towards the north. To shorten the journey we had struck far out in the great lake, but not so far but that we could still keep the headlands of the great points in sight for our guidance.

During the last night there had been quite a heavy fall of snow. It somewhat impeded our rapid progress but our dogs were good and as long as there was no wind to lift up this light snow we did not much mind it. It was a bitterly cold day, but we had so arranged our loads on our sleds that we could easily jump off and run until the vigourous exercise so warmed us that we much enjoyed the subsequent ride. Thus on we sped until many miles were between us and our camp of the previous night. As we journeyed on, the wind in fitful gusts began to blow around us. At first it was not alarming and we did not mind it. Even when we lost sight of the distant headlands, as they were swallowed up in the haze, we foolishly pushed on, instead of at once dashing at full speed, as we ought to have done, for the shore. The fitful gusts of an hour before were now increased to a wild gale which lifted up the light snow, and soon the air was full of it. Still, as the wind con-

tinued up to this time to blow steadily in one direction, which was from the north, we bravely pushed on in the very teeth of it.

"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." If we had had an experienced guide along with us he would have had us safely ensconced in the shelter of the woods on the shore. Instead of that, here we two greenhorns, as the Indians afterwards called us, were out many miles from the shore foolishly battling against what had now become a howling, furious blizzard. We stopped long enough for me to tie the tail-rope of my sled to the collar of the leader dog of Alec's train. This was done as a precautionary measure, so that we might not get separated from each other in the now blinding gale. Then, shouting to our dogs, we resumed our journey as best we could. Bravely did the noble fellows continue to push on in the teeth of the storm, that no living horse would have faced.

As long as the wind had, as we thought, remained steadily blowing from the one quarter, we had kept up our courage. We knew that we were going in the right direction when we had our last glimpses of the

distant point, and since that time we had been trusting the wind. Now, as in the eddying gusts the wind began whirling around us, coming apparently from every quarter, we were most emphatically brought to realize that in all probability we had been running in a very erratic course, for the last two or three hours at least.

Utterly bewildered, I stopped my dogs, and as Alec's train came up near I shouted to the lad:

"Alec, I am afraid we are lost."

"Yes, we are surely lost," was his not very comforting reply.

"It is a blizzard, and that is where we have blundered," I said, "in allowing ourselves to be caught in it and we so far from shore."

At the mention of blizzard, so dreaded by those who know them best, Alec at once lost heart, and by the utterance of the words I have already quoted, and others in a similar strain, showed that he was well aware of our great danger.

We were, however, resolved not to give up without a struggle. So the question was; What had best be done? That is always an-

swered in that land where the bitter cold demands so much internal fuel, by, "Let us have something to eat."

So we opened a pemmican bag, and in the mouth of it we chopped into eatable pieces, some of the hard and tasteless, but exceedingly nutritious, food. We would have much enjoyed a few good cups of tea, with the hard dry stuff, but that was out of the question in such a place. We ate our meal as well as we could, liberally sharing the tough, hard food with our dogs, that had cuddled as close to us as their harness would allow. Jack, as usual, had the place nearest to me. This was his habit whenever it was possible. Not that he always expected to be fed, for as a general thing the dogs were given only one meal a day, and that one was at the night camp, when the day's work was done. However, to-day was an exception. The fact was it looked as if we had seen our last winter camp, and the blizzard storm would soon claim us as its victims. So we said, "We will share our pemmican with our splendid dogs, for poor indeed is the prospect for either their or our having another meal."

As Jack and I took alternate bites at the

tough pemmican, his being considerably larger than mine, I put my arm around his big neck, and had a good talk with him. I am a firm believer in the idea that dogs understand a great deal more than most people generally believe. And Jack was one that, having long been with me, knew, as I had often tested, almost everything that was said to him. He also well knew when he was the subject of our conversation at home, and was well pleased or hurt, as we spoke complimentarily or disparagingly about him.

So now, out there with the howling winds raging around us like savage beasts eager for their prey, we two, with Alec for a listener, had a candid talk about our distressing situation. I began by telling him that we were lost, and that the chances were against our getting safely out of this fearful storm. This did not seem to disturb him, so I said, "Jack, my noble fellow, do you know that it is doubtful whether we shall ever see our home again? The prospect is that the snow will soon be our winding-sheet, and that loving eyes will look out in vain for our return. The chances, Jack, are that you will never again stretch your-

self out on your favourite resting-place on the wolf skin before the study fire. Rouse yourself, old dog and do your best, for in your intelligence we are going to trust to get us out of this wild blizzard, and to lead us to a place of safety."

Thus, with my face, although it was half covered with ice and snow, close to his, I talked to Jack as a man would to a friend. His answer he gave in a kiss or two on my face, and in deeds that were simply marvellous.

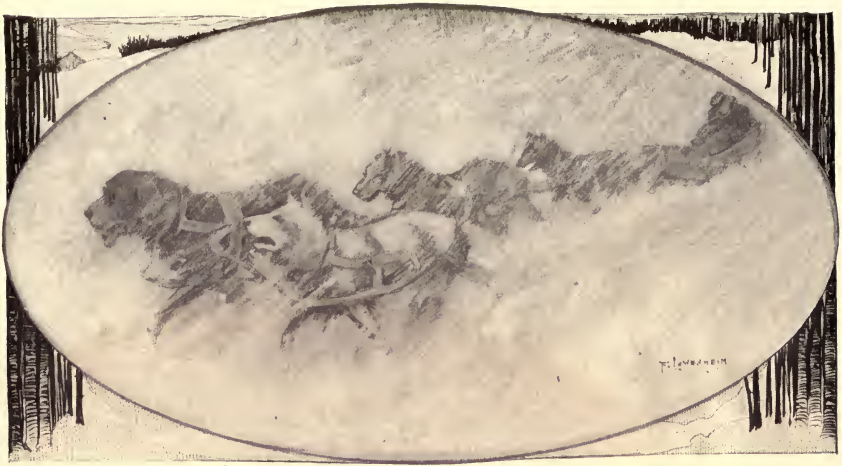
The few arrangements necessary for the race for life, against such fearful odds, were soon made. In a rabbit-skin blanket, which when rightly made is, for its weight, the warmest robe ever worn, I carefully wrapped up Alec, and as comfortably and as securely as possible I fastened him on his dog sled. As before mentioned, our trains were so fastened together that we could not get separated. Straightening out the dogs, that had during the halt huddled at our feet, I wrapped myself as warmly as I could. I then so seated myself on my sled, that I was able to tie myself on so firmly that even if I became unconscious from the cold I could not fall off.

The leader, as we have said, was Koona. He was a wise and intelligent leader under ordinary conditions of travel, but in the blinding storms, he seemed to lose confidence in himself and expected to be guided by the cheery voice of his driver. So it was on this trying occasion. When I shouted, "Marche," the Indian word for "Go," Koona only turned towards me and by his bewildered look seemed to say. "Which way, Master?" I was just as much at sea as he was and, up to that moment had hoped that the superior intelligence of this leader dog, would get us out of our difficulty. But it was evident that he was going to throw the responsibility upon me, and this was what I had no more desire to assume than had the dog. So once again I shouted, "Marche!"

Still there was no sign of his starting, but if possible a more anxious look into my face and an eager waiting for the Indian word, "Chaw," or "Yee," ("Right" or "Left"). I was now so completely bewildered by the fierce whirling blizzard that I had not the slightest idea of any of the points of the compass. The cold was terrible and of course we could not stay there.

On we must go somewhere, and so in sheer desperation I shouted out to Jack, as he was the second dog in the train. Eager and alert to start he had been, from the first word shouted to Koona, but like a well trained dog he knew his place, and that he was expected to follow his leader. He had, however, been showing a good deal of impatience at the hesitancy of Koona, and so now I saw that he was ready for any call that might be made upon him. So I shouted, "Go on, Jack, whichever way you like, and do the best you can, for I do not know anything about it!"

Nothing more was necessary. The noble dog at once seemed to realize that on him rested the responsibility of rescuing us from our perilous position. And grandly did he perform the tremendous task, as with one of his cheery barks he sprang forward in the tempest, Koona, with slackened traces, gladly dropped back, and was quite content to resign the leadership to the more powerful dog. During the long run that followed, never once did the bewildered dog seem to wish, as many a dog does, to again take his position as leader. Koona seemed to have had enough dog sense to



A RIDE IN A WILD, HOWLING BLIZZARD.

know that Jack, in this trying ordeal, could do better work than he, and so he ran beside the larger dog and at times cleverly availed himself of the protection thus afforded to shield himself from some of the fiercest blasts of the storm.

So thoroughly was the blizzard lifting the snow from the ice, that we were able to travel with a good degree of speed. Hours succeeded hours, and still the storm shrieked and howled around us. With undiminished vigour Jack kept to his work. Occasionally I would shout out to him some cheery word, and back through the gale would come his well-known bark. It had in it the ring of victory, and strangely kept up our spirits and hopefulness, and the assurance that we were yet going to escape this peril, although we could but be conscious of the fact that we were indeed in very great danger of perishing. The cold was now so gripping us that it seemed as though we must freeze to death. The very necessary precaution of tying ourselves on our sleds made it impossible for us to spring off and run, as we frequently did under ordinary circumstances. So all there was for us to do was to just endure it and hope for

the best. As I was very anxious about the welfare of my Indian comrade, and resolved to keep him from falling into that strange langour that precedes death by freezing, I frequently shouted out to him to keep awake. Oh how weary and unpleasant seemed the hours as they slowly followed each other, each succeeding one appearing to bring us no nearer to rescue or deliverance!

From about midday this trial of endurance had continued. Now to add to our wretchedness, the darkness of night began to surround us. This not only increased our discomfort, but added very much to our danger. It was bad enough when we could see, even if our vision was very much limited by the storm, that swirled and eddied around us, but now to be shrouded in the dense darkness, out on a great lake, nearly three hundred miles long and from forty to seventy wide in this part, where the storm struck us, was indeed no enviable position to occupy. But we did not lose hope. There were several things in our favour. Our dogs under the marvellous leadership of Jack, seemed to have caught his enthusiastic, indomitable spirit, and so, hour

after hour, were gallantly pressing on through the storm as though they saw in the distance the welcome camp fire, and scented their supper of white fish thawed out for them before the blazing flame.

So there was no need of losing heart while the dogs were setting us such an example of confidence and courage. Then we were both young and strong, and had with us our camp outfit of robes and blankets, and if our dogs became rattled or discouraged we might spread out these robes and blankets, and getting under them, with our dogs huddled around and partly on us, we could at least try to keep alive during the night. So trusting in a loving Providence, who had more than once before marvellously opened up our way, we resolved in quiet restfulness of spirit to make no change as long as Jack, the glorious fellow, kept pushing on with such confidence and courage. From my knowledge of dogs, I decided that he was confident of his course, or he never would have continued on at such a rate, and so inspiring all the other dogs with confidence and assurance—save Koona. So with the exception of the occasional cheery calls to Jack, to which he always responded, and

the warning cries to my young Indian comrade not to go to sleep in spite of the bitter cold, I managed to keep, or was kept, in a comfortable state of mind without anxiety or fear.

Thus on we were whirled over the great frozen lake, where, we knew not. But it was evident that if the dogs could keep up such a rapid gait they would certainly in time, bring us out somewhere, and so we resolved that we would try and keep from freezing, or even going to sleep, for under such conditions sleep might mean death without waking.

It was perhaps three hours after dark, when I was agreeably startled by the fact that the dogs had detected something and were much excited by the discovery. It was a long time since I had been able to see them, owing to the darkness of the night and the density of the storm, but it did not require a view of them to tell one accustomed to dogs that they had suddenly become possessed of some knowledge that their drivers knew not of. At first I was inclined to think that perhaps some roaming wild beast had become bewildered in the blizzard, and was near us, far out on the

great lake, and that the scent of it had only excited the hunting instincts of my dogs. However, there was but little time or chance for theorizing, or any thing else, except to hang on to the sleds and exercise all the skill possible to keep them from capsizing, as the now thoroughly excited dogs madly dashed along. Such a burst of speed could not last very long, nor was it necessary, for in a short time they gave us a very tangible evidence of the correctness of their keenness of scent, and noble Jack won all honours possible, as the peerless leader.

The fellow had, after a run of sixty or seventy miles in the teeth of a first-class blizzard, with the temperature anywhere from thirty to fifty below zero, gallantly led the way to the icy accumulations cut out, and piled up day by day, by a number of Indian families who, living on the shore, come out here for their daily supply of water. As for months these Indians had been here cutting out the ice that froze each night, there was quite a large pile of it. Squarely did Jack strike that pile, and gallantly aided by the dogs behind he scaled its jagged sides and, before I fully realized what it was, we were in a pellmell sort of

a style tumbling down on the other side. Fortunately we did not fall in the open water-hole, but struck finely the beaten trail that led up in the forest to the wigwams of the Indians. Over it the dogs fairly flew. Soon we knew we were being pulled up the steep side of a bluff and in a few minutes more as we were being hurled along the smooth but crooked trail, we saw the welcome sparks flying out of the top of the birch-bark wigwams. A blessed sight indeed was this, for we were safe at last; and can any one blame me if, after our notes of thanksgiving to a kind Providence, we shouted out:

"Well done, Jack!"

VII

JACK IN CIVILIZATION

WITH the most profound regret we left those Northern fields on account of severe and protracted illness in the household, which made it imperative that we should go to a more temperate climate, if the valuable life that was threatened was to be preserved.

We transferred the work and all that belonged to it to our honoured successor, including all the dogs, with the exception of Jack. Mrs. Young and the children pleaded that Cuffy should also be allowed to come, but the expense would have been so much the greater, and the energetic missionary there continuing the work was very fond of her and much needed her in his rearranged train.

Without any very startling incidents, we reached Toronto and, shortly after proceeded to a pretty little town called Port

Perry, where we settled down in our new home.

Jack accepted the new surroundings as though he had been accustomed to them all his days. He speedily attracted great attention and was admired and petted by all classes of people. He was "borrowed" by clergymen, doctors, merchants, farmers and others, to show to their friends. Sometimes he would be away on these visits for days, but he would never remain away beyond a certain length of time. When Jack thought it was time for him to go home nothing would stop him. A big farmer, wishing to keep him longer than he desired to remain, undertook to tie him. He soon gave up that job.

Speaking about it after, he said: "I might as well have tried to tie up a tiger."

Jack speedily made himself useful in our pretty parsonage home. One of his duties was to go to the butcher's for meat, as required in the household. A basket with a good cover and strong handle was specially purchased for his use. A clean towel and an envelope, in which was money and directions for the butcher, were placed inside, and then the whole was given to the eager

dog and he was sent on his errand. He wasted no time on the road. When he reached the shop, he would allow no man but the butcher himself, or some assistant he pointed out, to take the basket. When his basket was loaded for him, he carefully and quickly returned home with it. Frequently the butcher would be requested to put a piece of meat in for Jack, and to show it to him and to tell him that special piece was for him.

He came home proudly with his load, and always expected that some member of the family would give him cheery words. He dearly loved a—"Thank you, Jack. You noble dog, you have done well!"

Indeed, he ever had a weakness for compliments. How singular, and so exclusively confined to dogs!

Any member of the family could unpack the basket, and if it were thought that Jack did not then need the piece of meat put in for him, he made not the slightest objection to seeing his piece put away where his food was generally kept.

But sometimes, to entertain some interested guests, Mrs. Young would say to him, knowing that there was a piece for him in

the basket, "Jack, I don't want to be bothered with you and your basket! Take it out to Maggie in the kitchen, and let her empty it."

Jack of course obeyed. But see what a change at once comes over him. He carries his precious load out into the kitchen and sets it down at Maggie's feet, and there he stands like an alert sentinel. Maggie, as might be expected, reaches down to take it up, but a roar from the big dog, causes her to drop it in a hurry.

"Take the cover off the basket where it is!" To this request the girl is naturally at first a little loth to comply but, being reassured, she does so, and meets with no opposition from the dog while taking off the cover. Then as Jack's piece of meat is there on top, the girl naturally attempts to remove it, that she may get out the well-wrapped-up piece that is beneath. But to this procedure Jack most decidedly objects. All he will allow her to do is to get the wrapped-up piece out, without taking his out of the basket. He never would allow a servant to remove his meat, neither would he take it out himself until the family piece was removed, then he would carry the basket with

his piece in it, out among the trees, and there he would take it out himself, and leisurely eat it, or *cache* it away until needed.

In the numerous invitations which were continually being received for lectures and addresses, there was the constant request: "Be sure and bring Jack!" The result was, that as I travelled up and down throughout the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, Jack was as well known to thousands as was his master. In the large halls and lecture rooms, as well as in many of the largest churches, Jack, the famous missionary dog, was ever a welcome visitor. At Sunday-school picnics and other gatherings of the children, Jack was the hero of the hour, and many of the little ones hugely enjoyed the ride upon his back. Then, when the speakers assembled on the platform, and the music and speaking began, Jack had an honourable place among the parsons and others of that class, and none who knew of him and his work ever thought of disputing his right to his place among those most highly honoured.

The following is a good illustration of Jack's popularity with even the highest

classes in the land. I was walking one day along a well filled street in a capital city of one of our Canadian Provinces with Jack at my heels. Suddenly I heard my name being shouted out most energetically:

"Mr. Young! Mr. Young!"

At first I could not make out whence the calling proceeded. Soon however, as it was accompanied by the waving of a red silk parasol, I perceived it was from the daughter of the Governor of the Province, sitting in a splendid carriage.

Lifting my hat, I responded to her calls, for we had met before, and she said:

"The Judges are coming to dine at the Government House to-morrow. Please bring Jack up to dinner, and come yourself!"

Of course we went, Jack and I. And we dined with the Governor and his family and the Judges. And everybody made a great fuss over Jack.

On the railroads Jack became a great favourite with the trainmen. His place, on a journey, was always with the baggage men, and he and they had some lively but good-natured romps. When I started off with him on a railway journey, I always took

him to the baggage car and there left him, with orders there to remain until we reached our stopping place, and then I would come for him. So good was he that he was never tied up in the car. He well knew what was expected of him and cheerfully obeyed. At the different stations where the train stopped to let off or take on passengers and baggage, Jack would frequently jump out on the platform while the baggage men were busy with the trunks or other luggage. But he never got left. In some way or other, he seemed to know when it was his duty to spring in the car again. He was very obedient to my orders to wait at the baggage car until I would come for him. This he always did, with one notable exception. Then he disobeyed orders most decidedly. But before you court-martial him, or even censure him, listen to the story, and then see if you would have found Jack guilty.

Mrs. Young and I, with Jack, were coming up from Trenton to Toronto on the Grand Trunk Railway. Jack as usual was put in the large baggage car, with orders to remain there until I came for him. Mrs. Young and I were in the last car of the

train. We had hardly been travelling more than an hour, when some obstruction—if we remember correctly, it was a misplaced switch on the track—threw our engine and all of the cars following, off the track. The baggage car, which as usual was next to the engine, turned sideways and thus went down a small embankment. This erratic movement caused the sliding door in the lower side of the car to speedily fly open. The instant the door thus opened Jack sprang out (so we were afterwards told). He struck the ground before the car had ceased moving and rolled over in the dirt, but quickly rose up unhurt, and disappeared from the view of the baggage men. Such was the speed with which we were going when the accident occurred that the car in which Mrs. Young and I were sitting was shot or broken almost completely off its running gear. Fortunately nobody in our car was hurt.

We, of course, all sprang at once to our feet and rushed for the door. We were thankful to find that it had not jammed, and so we were able to get out very quickly. As our seat had been very near the door,

we were about the first to rush out. We were excited by the cries of those injured or confined in the cars in front, and were anxious to help. But before I had run many yards, there was Jack coming with all the speed imaginable. The instant he recognized me he gave a howl of delight, and fairly springing upon me, he threw his great fore-paws around my neck and held me with a grip like a bear, while he kissed me repeatedly in dog fashion and again howled out his joy that I had escaped injury.

When I could get him down and quiet his delight a little, he happened to see Mrs. Young, and away he rushed for her, and again we had an exhibition of his delight that we had both fortunately escaped without injury. His remarkable conduct on this occasion attracted much attention from a number of people, and there was much discussion and speculation afterwards about Jack's actions on that day. These are the facts as they occurred, and they are worthy of study.

We had Jack with us only a couple of years before he died, and that was from a sad wound inflicted upon him by some re-

vengeful gipsies. The cause of this vengeance and Jack's premature death, was this:

One day, when Jack was returning home from the butcher's shop with a well-filled basket, he was suddenly attacked by a fierce white bull-dog belonging to these gipsies. Jack, faithful to his trust, while still holding on to his basket, managed to shake off the treacherous brute that had so assailed him when thus encumbered with his load. He succeeded in getting home with his basket, but the minute it was safely delivered, Jack was off like a shot. I was astonished to see the ease with which he sprang over the front gate, and his sudden disappearance down the street. He was not long in reaching the encampment of these gipsies. The bulldog, the object of his ire, was now ensconced in the yard, but Jack speedily sprang over the gate and quickly seized him, and although his owners had boasted of his terrible fighting powers, he was no match for the insulted and indignant Jack.

Those who saw the fight or punishment, said that after the first minute or so Jack was so completely the master that he literally shook that big bulldog as a trained

terrier does a rat. Then when he threw him down, the thrashed dog was so cowed that he lay flat on the ground. Jack walked around him several times, uttering a few ominous growls, which doubtless were words of advice to the miserable fellow to behave himself in future. Then turning towards the gate, Jack sprang over it with the agility of a greyhound and leisurely marched home. But he was ruffled in spirits and out of sorts all day.

Of course the revengeful gipsies could not forgive this thrashing, and the humiliation to which their great fighter had been obliged to submit. For months they tried in various ways to injure or kill Jack, and at length they succeeded in inflicting a grievous wound in one of his shoulders. We had done for him all that skilled veterinary surgeons could do, but their efforts were in vain. One trouble was, the wound could not be reached by Jack's tongue, which is Nature's great plan for the cure of these things. As I saw my glorious, patient dog, my faithful companion in many a long, lone journey, my deliverer, humanly speaking, from many a dangerous blizzard storm, thus dying slowly before me, I did long for wise

old Rover, the famous dog doctor of my wounded dogs in other days. I have always felt confident that Rover could have cured that wounded shoulder of Jack. Other dogs with great wounds were cured by him, but alas! poor Jack was too far away from him, and so we thus lost him. And when he died there was sadness and gloom in that house for many a day, for even the children were comfortless and lonesome, for they could not easily forget their great playmate and protector.

We buried Jack at the foot of a beautiful Canadian maple tree. If, as John Wesley and many other thoughtful learned men believed, there is to be a resurrection for the brute creation, surely Jack deserved it. And why should he not have it?

VIII

CUFFY, THE BEAUTIFUL NEWFOUNDLAND DOG

CUFFY was the most beautiful dog I ever owned. She was a thoroughbred Newfoundland of the short curly-haired variety. Every curl upon her seemed absolutely perfect, and they were apparently all of the same size. She was always an object of admiration to every lover of these noble animals. Even persons who had but little love for dogs would stop and admire beautiful Cuffy.

Like Jack, her inseparable companion, she was a gift from the late Senator Sanford, of Hamilton. In company with Jack, she reached our far-off northern home on the land of the Cree Indians, after a long journey of about three thousand miles. During this tedious trip, which occupied several weeks, these two dogs were on several lines of railroads and steamboats. When they reached the northern limits of these civilized methods of transportation,

they were then transferred to an Indian skiff, and in this primitive boat, packed in with fur traders' outfits, they finished their long journey and reached our Mission none the worse for their many adventures. One thing that perhaps more than anything else deterred unprincipled dog fanciers from stealing either of them, was the pathetic engraving on the brass plates on the collar of each dog. It read as follows:—

"A poor Missionary's dog,
Please don't steal him."

This proved a sufficient deterrent, and so my two valuable dogs reached me in safety. Years after, I travelled over that same wild route by which these dogs had come, and was not a little amused by hearing the comments of several persons, who admitted that they had cast covetous eyes upon those magnificent dogs, but had been restrained from stealing them by the warning legend on their collars.

Cuffy was not only very beautiful in appearance, but she was also so affectionate and docile in every way, that Mrs. Young speedily claimed her as her special possession, and the claim was never after dis-

EGERTON R. YOUNG AND "JACK" OF TO-DAY.

puted. She soon learned that she was considered the sole property of her mistress, and as a very natural result, she most decidedly constituted herself her alert protector. Woe to the strange dog that in Cuffy's jealous watchfulness came too near her beloved mistress. Size or sex made no difference. The intruder would be attacked with such fury that he was glad to beat an ignominious retreat, often without the slightest idea why he had received such a shaking. Very soon after this loving relationship had been established between Cuffy and her mistress the affectionate creature was ever striving to manifest her love. We were all amused by the persistent way in which she was ever constituting herself her mistress's footstool. No matter whether it was out for a walk in the wild woods during our brief pleasant summer time, or at home amidst household cares, the instant Mrs. Young sat down to rest, Cuffy would throw herself at her feet and in her mute but eloquent way, plead that her warm, curly body might have the honour of being her mistress's footstool. Then when the meals were announced and we gathered round the table, Cuffy would crawl under

the table near to her mistress's feet and insist upon their being placed upon her side. If there was any delay in this being done, Cuffy would twist her head around and taking the feet carefully in her mouth, would place them where she desired them to rest. This being accomplished to her satisfaction, she would then remain perfectly still until the sitting or meal was ended.

She was very easily taught to fetch and carry, and nothing gave her greater pleasure than to be sent into other rooms for well-known articles. She became quite an adept at this work, but never equalled Jack, as some of his triumphs were simply marvellous. Cuffy acquired the art of opening every door in the house, when she was on the side where it opened from her, but she was completely foiled when the door opened towards her. With but a few lessons I taught Jack how to accomplish the feat, and he never had any difficulty afterwards, but poor Cuffy never could get possession of the knack of pulling the door towards her and thus opening it. However, this did not much bother her, if Jack happened to be about, and they were generally together; for after making an attempt on the door and

as usual failing, she would march over to the spot where Jack was comfortably sleeping upon his fur rug, and unceremoniously seizing him by the ear, would lead him to the closed door and in expressive dog language would order him to immediately open it.

With this demand he always quickly complied, for Cuffy was a bit of a tyrant and, presuming on her sex, lorded it over him most thoroughly. In fact she had him in the most thorough subjection, and it often gave us lots of amusement to watch her coquettish and tantalizing ways, and Jack's patience and quiet dignity. Yet, like many a hen-pecked spouse, it seemed that the more she imposed upon him, the greater his love and jealous care.

The only battles that I recall having had with Jack, were on Cuffy's account, and battles royal they were. They came about in this way. The principal food for all my dogs was fish. During the winter months the fish are frozen so hard that they have to be thawed out ere they are fed to the dogs. When the dogs were at home the fish were thawed out at the hot kitchen fire and distributed among the hungry animals in the

yard outside. Cuffy could not, or would not understand that she was not to take her large, oily fish into the house and there leisurely devour it on the study or dining-room floor. A big grease-spot on the floor or carpet seemed a trifling affair in comparison with her having to eat her supper in the bitter cold. Several times had I sternly reproved her, and put her outside, to finish her fish with the other dogs. Finding at length that scoldings were of no avail, and some protests coming in from other quarters about carpets being ruined, I was at length obliged to resort to stern measures, and so one evening, when her actions had been unusually provoking, I took her out and gave her a real good whipping. As she had never before been whipped, she did not at first realize what it meant. However, I was resolved that she should know, and know so thoroughly, that the whipping would not have to be repeated, and so I continued the use of the lash until she began to vigourously cry out under its infliction.

Anticipating trouble from yet another quarter, I had prepared for the emergency. I had placed near at hand a large heavy

oak axe handle, and it turned out fortunate enough for me that I had such a formidable weapon. Just as I had expected, Jack's blood was up as soon as he heard Cuffy's cries. He was on the opposite side of the large yard and busily engaged in eating his second fish. Suddenly springing up, he was a splendid sight as there he stood for an instant, head up, ears alert, and with his foot on his coveted, half-devoured fish. As Cuffy's cries continued, with a rush and a roar the enormous fellow came for me.

I knew, from some exciting experiences I had had with angry dogs in the past, that my dog-whip was of but little avail in the battle before me, and so I quickly exchanged it for the heavy axe-handle. And I had to be quick about it, for it did not take the now thoroughly angry dog long to dash across the yard and plunge recklessly at me for the rescue of his beloved mate. However, I was ready for him; and so, as he sprang viciously at me I was able to strike him such a blow that I knocked him completely over. In an instant he was up again, and once more he sprang at me just as viciously as before. However, I was on my guard, and again, with all my might, I struck him on

the side of his head. He went down all in a heap, and at first I thought I had killed him.

But this was only for a few seconds. Then he was up, and again he charged me. My third blow completely dazed him, so much so that when he rallied from it he skulked off to the kennels. Next day he was distant and sulky, and it was evident that we were to have another battle ere the question as to which was master would be settled. The decisive battle came off a few days after. As I had been obliged so abruptly to leave off punishing Cuffy and fight for my life against Jack, her ladyship had become possessed with the idea that the victory had been on their side, and that she could do as she liked. The result was that one evening shortly after, she marched into the dining-room with a large fish, and there on the carpet began leisurely to devour it. And, furthermore, when requested to take up her fish and go outside she most decidedly, with ruffled curls and angry growls, refused to do anything of the kind.

It was quite evident that things were coming to a crisis in the dog kingdom. Had Jack encouraged her to thus act, and were

other dogs in sympathy with her and also getting ready to go on strike against authority?

No matter, whatever it is it must be met and settled, and settled in such a manner that it will not be repeated. The first thing I did was to shut Jack up in the fish house. Then I went for Cuffy. I gave her a most thorough trouncing. Before I was through with her, she found out who was master, and never did she growl at me again.

During her castigation she had cried bitterly. These cries had terribly excited Jack. Like a caged lion, he had growled and raged in his prison abode, out of which he had made the most desperate attempts to escape. He smashed the few panes of glass in the window of the fish house, but the window was too small and high for him to struggle through.

When I had thoroughly conquered Cuffy, and we were good friends again, I armed myself with the same axe handle I had used before, and then went to have it out with Jack. The instant I unlocked the door, I sprang back on my guard. Without any hesitancy and just as viciously as before he sprang at my throat. I am confident that

if I had slipped or missed him, he would have killed me. But I did not miss him. My muscles were strong and hardened by the vigourous exercise of that wild Northland, and so it was possible for me to strike a blow like a blacksmith. Big as he was and weighing nearly two hundred pounds, he went down under that blow as though shot. His recuperative power seemed marvellous. Again and again he came for me, but in every instance I was thus able to throw him over. At length he began to lose heart in his rushes, and then, after receiving a specially ugly clip on the jaw, his opposition ceased and all the fight seemed suddenly to go out of him, and there the great big fellow lay sprawled out on the ground and coolly looking at me.

Now, for the first time since the commencement of the conflict, I spoke to him:

"Jack! What do you mean by this? I am ashamed of you! Come here! Come at once! How dare you act like this!"

Thus talking to him, I stretched out one of my hands to him, and at once he began crawling towards me. As he slowly came crouching to my feet and the big tail began wagging, I saw that the dog was conquered.

Throwing away the big club, I fearlessly met him half-way and at once began stroking the great head, on which I had, such a short time before, rained such heavy blows. Jack was conquered, and so was Cuffy, and from that day forward, my word was law, and never again did either of them receive a blow.

The writing of these battles with my noble dog has been the most unpleasant part of my work. Some readers may perhaps chide me as having been too severe in my methods. But it must be remembered that in such conflicts the man or the dog must be the master. The punishment at the time seemed severe but it never had to be repeated. For eleven years Jack was obedient and true, and never after that last battle was he struck again.

As might have been expected from her Newfoundland origin, Cuffy was very fond of the water. She was a splendid swimmer, and with Jack as her companion spent several hours each day in the lake, on the shores of which we dwelt, during the few warm months of our brilliant summer. She would generally remain in the water long after Jack had felt that he had had quite

enough swimming for that day. He, however, would never lose sight of her until she had become thoroughly satisfied with her joyous sportings in the waves. When at length she returned to the shore, great indeed was his delight, and noisily demonstrative his welcome. Then most thoroughly would she impose upon him. Instead of swimming east where there was a pleasant sandy beach, and there easily walking ashore, her ladyship would swim directly towards the spot on the steep rocky shore where Jack was visible, and there insist upon him helping her up at that precipitous place. This was not always an easy job. If Jack had happened to be where the rock rose only a short distance above the water, he could reach down and, seizing her by the back of her neck, help her to scramble to shore. Sometimes, however, it happened that when Cuffy started for the land, Jack would be perched on one of the highest points of the rocky shore. Then the fun would begin. Jack, apparently conscious of the trouble ahead, would carry on in the most frantic manner, and seemed to be trying to tell the obstinate dog that she was coming to the wrong place. But not a whit

cared Cuffy. To that spot would she swim, and when she reached it she would raise herself up as high as she could and then howl and cry for assistance.

Poor Jack! He was simply wild with excitement. In vain would he reach down as far as he could, and bark back to her, in response to her howlings. Various were the expedients which he used to try to help her out. One of the most ingenious plans, and which displayed a good deal of reasoning power, was to rush off to a pile of old rubbish or lumber and there select a long, thin stick. Carrying this back to the steep, he would drop one end of it over to Cuffy. He would then vigourously haul on at the other end, and soon land her on the shore, greatly to his delight. Never, however, did any of us observe her appear to express the slightest gratitude for all his solicitude or clever expedients for her rescue. She just accepted it all as a matter of course, and, as usual, snubbed him on the first occasion afterward.

One of her great delights when in the water was to frolic with some large sturgeon which I had secured in the lake near the shore. These sturgeon are only to be

caught during a few weeks, and then they swarmed in great numbers on our shores. They were caught in large gill-nets by the Indians, and brought alive to the Mission. Their meat when fresh is much superior to what it is when salted. The result was we resorted to various expedients to keep these great sturgeon alive, until we wished to use them. Some of them were ten feet long. One plan was to make a sturgeon pond in some sheltered bay. This answered very well when we had a large number of them, but if there were only a few in that pond, they became so wary and cunning, that it was very difficult to capture one when desired.

A very common plan was to have a few swimming in the lake each fastened to the end of a long rope. These ropes were of soft cotton and from sixty to one hundred feet long. One end was so fastened to the sturgeon's head that it caused no pain or inconvenience. The other end of the rope was secured at the shore. Sturgeon are very powerful fish and are able to give a strong pull. Being thus tied did not seem to trouble them much, and so they gambolled and played as much as usual before us.

Nothing pleased Cuffy more than to plunge into the water among them and to take a part in the fun. At first when she used to thus spring in among them, they would all dive down and lie quietly at the bottom. After a while some of them at least did not seem to mind her and played about as usual.

There was an especially large one, that became quite friendly with Cuffy, although the dog never seemed to understand how it was that the fish could so quickly get out of sight. One great trick of Cuffy's was to firmly seize hold of the tail of the great fish. The instant the sturgeon would feel this, down it would quickly dive, dragging Cuffy completely out of sight. It would not however be very long before the dog, sputtering and blowing, would come to the surface and quickly strike out for the shore. Here she would cough and sneeze at a great rate until she had forced all the water out of her lungs. This sudden and doubtless unexpected plunge into the depths, did not in any way discourage the plucky dog and so, as soon as the sturgeon was up and apparently looking for its old playmate, Cuffy would plunge in to renew this most unique sport.

We used up all the other sturgeon ere we cast our hungry eyes on Cuffy's queer playmate. We let it live, and they enjoyed their strange gambols together, until the winter was close at hand and the water had become so icy cold that it seemed cruel to allow Cuffy to plunge into it. Then we feasted upon it. But what an attraction it would have made for an enterprising showman!

Living on fish, as we were obliged to do in those days, for nearly all the winter months, it was a great pleasure to go off to the goose hunt in the spring with the prospect of returning with a number of those splendid game birds. I will tell of Cuffy's first encounter with an old goose, which, although wounded, had still enough fight in him to keep at bay for a time even the redoubtable Cuffy.

As was but natural, I felt quite proud when I saw my first wild goose drop, slowly it is true, from the passing flock at which I had fired, and light with a broken wing far out on the distant ice-field. I had with me one train of dogs. These I had ordered to crouch low at my feet while I fired. Cuffy's quick eye was the first to catch sight of the wounded goose, even while it was high up

in the air, and observe its desperate efforts to stay with its fellows. When this was impossible and it began to descend, I quickly unharnessed the eager dog. The instant the goose alighted, at a distance of at least three-quarters of a mile away, I gave Cuffy a cheery word, and let her go.

Quickly reloading my gun I sprang on my dog-sled and as rapidly as we could travel, we followed after. Hampered as we were by Cuffy's dangling harness, we could not make very rapid progress, but we did get near enough to see the battle between Cuffy and that wild goose. At first the goose, by rapid running, aided by its one wing, tried to get away from the dog. When, however, it found out that this was impossible, it suddenly stopped and stood on the defensive. With a bark of anticipated easy triumph, Cuffy recklessly rushed in to seize the goose. But alas, what a humiliation! Before that dog knew what had happened, she was lying on her back on the ice and fairly howling with rage and pain. With one quick blow, with his uninjured wing, that old goose had struck that dog such a blow that under its terrific force she was knocked over and dazed by it.

But Cuffy was a very gamey dog and so she was soon up and at it again. Another humiliating fall or two awaited her and taught her to be wary. So as she sprang at the goose again, she feinted in her rushes. Then when she had thrown the goose off his guard she made a quick rush, and just as we reached her it was all over with that goose.

Cuffy's head was sore for days after. The goose was a tough old gander and so we hung him up for some weeks, ere we considered him tender enough to be tackled as a specially dainty article of food.

Cuffy served me well for a number of years as one of my finest sleigh dogs. She took to the work very easily and never had she to be whipped or even scolded when in harness. A cheery word was all that was necessary to induce Cuffy to do all that she could do. With Jack she was privileged above all the other dogs at the wintry camps. When blizzards howled over us, and the cold was so terrible that the spirit thermometer indicated anywhere in the neighbourhood of fifty or sixty degrees below zero, these two dogs were permitted to sleep on, and sometimes under, my fur robes to help keep me from freezing to death.

IX

VOYAGEUR, THE MATCHLESS LEADER

VOYAGEUR was the finest leader dog I ever owned. No horse responded more quickly to the pull upon the rein than did Voyageur to the voice of his driver. Certain words used by the dog-drivers soon become well understood by the leaders, and are obeyed by them with more or less promptness according to the intelligence or training of the dogs. Some dogs that at times display great intelligence and quickness in responding to the calls of the driver, at other times seem provokingly stupid. But Voyageur could always be depended upon. "Marche!" to him always meant "Go on," while "Chaw" or "Yee," meant to turn to the right or left as might be required, and never did he mistake the one for the other. Then when "Isse!" was added to either word, he knew it meant to turn back sharp and quick on the trail on the side indicated by the added word.

Voyageur was a large, long-legged nearly white dog of mixed breed, and not what might be called handsome. When being trained in early life, he displayed such an amount of fierceness and stubbornness that he was severely whipped. On one of these occasions the end of the heavy lash accidentally struck him in one of his eyes and destroyed it. This was a great sorrow to his master, but it did not in the end seem to be much of an injury to Voyageur. However, it made him ever after extremely nervous, and he ever resented being silently approached on his blind side.

He was never an affectionate or playful dog. A petting he considered an insult. Kind words offered in return for some splendid work done by him he treated with scorn, unless they were accompanied by an extra gift of pemmican or an additional fish to his usual allowance. He never was seen to play with other dogs, and so vigourously did he resent the efforts of some younger dogs to get up a romp with him that they seldom made a second attempt. When I opened the kennels and let all the dogs out for exercise, Voyageur seemed to consider the whole thing a nuisance, and never en-

tered into the wild, joyous frolics with the rest. If when driven out by an Indian he did condescend to follow, it was at least a hundred yards or so in the rear, and he seemed to rejoice when, unnoticed, he could turn back and curl up again in his favourite corner.

If allowed to run loose about the place during the months when the dogs were at work, one end of a rope about a hundred feet long, had to be tied around his neck. This was necessary as he was very difficult to catch. A clever Indian, however, taking advantage of his blind side, could generally without much trouble get near enough to him to take hold of this long trailing rope. When this was once accomplished, although I have seen two hours spent ere he was captured, Voyageur would at once surrender and never offer the slightest objection to being pulled in and harnessed up with the other dogs.

Once harnessed, there was a great transformation in him. This sullen, sulky, timid dog became the most alert and active of them all. As a leader he had no equal. One word from the driver, be he white man or Indian, was quite sufficient. If the route

was on the great lakes, skirting along from headland to headland, all that was necessary was to point to some bold bluff or cliff that showed up, say twenty miles away, and say: "Voyageur, that is our next point, now for it!" Straight as a surveyor's line would be the trail he would make, as with his traces taut, and without a guide in front or another word from his driver, he gallantly dashed along.

His worth and sagacity were specially displayed where the route lay over dangerous, treacherous places on the ice. This was not unfrequent during our late journeyings in the spring months, when the brilliant rays of the sun were disintegrating the ice and so candelling or separating it into long crystals that, although still several feet thick, it was dangerous to travel on. A person was liable to find himself suddenly dropping down through this strangely disintegrated ice that yielded to his weight and let him down through it, while in innumerable long splinters it rasped or grated with loud unpleasant sounds around him. To be able to detect these weak places and wind in and out and around them and thus keep all the dogs and sleds following, on safe,

strong ice, was the duty of the leader dog, if no well-trained Indian guide was at the front. It was in just such dangerous places that Voyageur seemed to excel. He was sensitive to a degree and wished to be let alone. All he wanted to know was the direction ahead in which he was to go, and no matter how much he had to twist and turn around these bad, treacherous spots in the ice, he kept the goal ever in view and would reach it with unfailing accuracy.

This even Jack and Cuffy would never do. They were too sympathetic to be reliable as guides. Sometimes when I have put one or the other of them at the head to try them they would do fairly well for a time but when a specially dangerous place had been safely passed they would be so delighted over the feat that they would sometimes, without a word having been said, abruptly turn round and come to me, apparently either to be commended for their good work or to see how I had survived the ordeal. This was very pleasant and kindly on their part, but it was not first-class dog travelling or indicative of the highest qualifications on the part of a leader. Several times it put us in very awkward predicaments, in places

still perilous, so we got into the habit of always putting Voyageur at the head, where dangers seen, and more frequently unseen by the human eye, beset our trail.

Thus for years he was the undisputed leader of the first train. Generally on my long trips, the Indian guide was at the front running on ahead. His snowshoes left sufficient track for the dogs, even if he himself were miles on ahead. No matter how crooked the path he thus marked out, the trained dogs followed on it exactly as thus indicated. But when a great lake was reached and the guide was weary of the monotony of having been, it may be for days, running on ahead alone, he would gladly resign the leadership to Voyageur. Gallantly would the noble dog take up the work thus assigned to him, and with the route once indicated, would push on, hour after hour, with unflagging energy, while the guide thus released, would travel on in the rear with the other Indians with whom he could chat and smoke as thus they followed in the trail or on the frozen lake.

Among the many remarkable instances of his intelligence and sagacity where in all probability Voyageur saved a number of

persons from a terrible death, the following is one of the most interesting.

For many years Norway House was one of the most important of the interior trading posts of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company. Here in its many buildings would be gathered from many of the remote trading posts, the valuable furs, until the greater part of the ship's cargo was accumulated for transportation down the mighty Nelson River to York Factory, and from that port shipped to England.

The importance of Norway House in those days thus made it one of the great centres of the fur trade. Here great councils of the Governor, Chief Factors, and other officials, were frequently held.

One winter a number of gentlemen in connection with the service, with their Indian dog drivers and servants, started from Old Fort Garry, now known as the city of Winnipeg, to travel by dog trains nearly four hundred miles north to Norway House. It was an unusually large party to thus travel in the depth of winter over the ice, with the temperature ranging anywhere from twenty to fifty below zero. Generally the business of this great and wealthy fur trading com-

pany was so arranged that the long trip of the gentlemen of the service could be made during the few months of the brilliant summer of that great Northland. However, there had arisen some emergency in the business of the Company, and this long cold journey had to be made by these officials and their retainers in spite of the bitter cold, and the fact that for a number of nights they would have to sleep in holes dug in the snow, in the dreary forests on the shores of the great Lake Winnipeg—on the frozen surface of which they travelled day after day.

There was a large number of dog trains with their Indian drivers, as in travelling of this description not only is it imperative to carry along large supplies of fur robes and blankets for the wintry beds, but abundant supplies of food, with kettles, guns, ammunition, axes and various other things, in addition to a large supply of pemmican and fish for the dogs.

Voyageur led the way. Not even the most clever of the Indian guides thought of indicating the route by keeping in the front while this noble dog was in his place. All that was necessary, when the wintry camp

in the forest was vacated and the whole party once more emerged from its depths on to the surface of the great lake, was to point out to faithful Voyageur the next headland or distant promontory and with a dash he was off straight as an arrow to the required destination. The loud calls, the pistol-like reports of the dog-whips and their stinging blows, so frequent on such hard journeys, were not needed when Voyageur led and he had companion dogs of equal courage and endurance, to respond to his splendid leadership.

Thus on they travelled towards the north, day after day. The sun shone with such undimmed brilliancy upon them that the greatest trouble arose from the attacks of snow-blindness caused by the reflection of the sun's rays upon the dazzling pure white snow. This disease is painful in the extreme. The first sensation of its coming is a copious flowing of water from the eyes. The next stage of the attack is extreme agony in the eyeballs, a sensation of pain, as though red hot sand was being thrown into the eyes. The final stage, if precautionary measures are not promptly taken,

is total blindness. On this special journey a number of the best Indian guides suffered very severely, and so with bandaged eyes they were only able to keep up by each holding on to a rope fastened to the hind end of the dog sleds.

One night while they were in their camp, there was a heavy fall of snow. In that cold land the snow does not pack hard upon the land or ice, but is light and is very easily lifted up by the first high wind that comes along. These winds, when they are fierce and strong and follow soon after a downfall of snow, constitute a blizzard.

A real blizzard should not be confounded with an ordinary snow storm. The blizzard is the after storm, and generally takes place when there is not a cloud in the sky. It is really only a high, fierce wind that lifts up the light, dry snow, that may have fallen days before, and drives and whirls it along with such fury that the air is at times thick with it, while every road or trail is simply obliterated. The falling of this additional quantity of snow, to which we have referred, did not much disturb either the whites or Indians of our travelling party. In fact, as it came down upon them after they were

snugly ensconced in their robes and blankets and completely covered up, it was considered as an additional covering, that only added to their warmth and comfort. However, it was not quite so pleasant on getting up the next morning as on former days, as the snow was everywhere, and some of it seemed to persist in getting down the backs of necks, and in other places where it was not welcome.

Then there was the additional work of hunting the dogs, some of whom were buried under several feet of snow, and persisted in there remaining in their comfortable retreats in spite of importunate calls, until they had to be literally dug out with snowshoes as substitute for shovels in the hands of the Indians.

When everything had been dug out of the snow, the sleds packed and the journey resumed, it was found out very quickly that as there was now nearly two feet of dry snow on the ice, it would be impossible to make as rapid progress as heretofore. However, as the storm was over and the sky cloudless they pushed on as rapidly as possible with Voyageur still bravely leading. Sometimes, however, a number of the In-

dian drivers with their snowshoes would, in Indian file, push on ahead and thus make a beaten trail which made it easier work for the dogs to drag the heavy sleds.

One afternoon there was a glorious phenomenon in the western sky. A hazy sort of a cloud seemed to come up from below the western horizon and to rapidly extend to the zenith. Then circle after circle appeared around the sun, while in each one of them mock suns shining in all colours of the rainbow were for a time most vivid and beautiful. Then as the haze increased, the circles dimmed away and the sun itself became the central point of a blazing cross of most startling and wondrous beauty. There for a time, in radiant glory, it shone in splendour, while above it still lingered a half-circle of one of the solar rings that an hour before had been so vivid and distinct.

But while these signs in the heavens charmed and delighted the gentlemen of this travelling party, they filled with anxiety the minds of the experienced Indians. These red men, well posted in such things, knew that a fierce storm was coming, and that these bright circles and that flaming cross were the signs that even now there was

rushing down from the regions of Athabaska or the Rocky Mountains a wind so fierce that when it struck that great Lake Winnipeg, on which now rested so peacefully that great covering of new-fallen snow, it would lift it up and transform it into cruel blizzards which, like great monsters, would shriek and howl for their victims. Only by the greatest endurance and skill could they escape if suddenly caught, far out from their camp or forest retreat.

When the Indians communicated their surmisings to the gentlemen in charge, it was decided to make every effort to push on as rapidly as possible. Every available man who could help pack the trail was sent on ahead to make the travelling easier for the dogs. Thus for hours they made good progress, as the storm was still distant and the snow undisturbed.

When night overtook them they turned into the forest and made their wintry camp. As the younger gentlemen sat around the fire well wrapped up in their fur garments and eating their suppers, they were inclined to laugh at the fears of the Indians who had predicted a coming blizzard. And it then did seem as though the forebodings of the

Indians were groundless, for no sign seemed to indicate a storm. Above them the stars were shining with the usual brilliancy of an arctic sky, for all the hazy appearances that had helped to make the wondrous visions of the previous day had entirely disappeared. Even the smoke as it rose up so perpendicularly from the blazing log fire in front of them gave no indication of the slightest breeze. All nature was so calm and still that it could hardly be a matter of surprise that these inexperienced young men should make merry and have a little fun at the expense of the old Indians. In the meantime these same old Indians paid but little heed to their remarks. They knew from the experiences of the past what was before them, and even while they were being ridiculed they were making all preparations to meet the coming storm.

Voyageur was given an extra fish by the Indians at feeding time, and provided with a deer skin on which to sleep, while at the same time his travelling rope was fastened to a tree, so that he should not skulk away.

As decided on by the gentlemen in charge, the start was made very early the next morning. The result was that they were many

miles on their journey ere the flashing, dancing, brilliant auroras, which had been of unusual splendour and activity, were lost in the superior brightness of the rising sun.

With the light thus afforded the whole party turned in towards the eastern shore to a well-wooded rocky point and there the Indians quickly cut down some dry trees and cooked the much needed breakfast, which was heartily enjoyed by all. The intense cold uses up so much of the vitality of the body that large quantities of the fattest of food are absolutely essential if travellers would keep in vigourous health. Then the journey was resumed, but it was not long before the changes rapidly taking place around and above them began to show that the old Indians were right in spite of the criticisms of the inexperienced white men.

Sometimes a blizzard comes down suddenly on travellers, fairly rolling over them like great fog banks sweeping in from the ocean. At other times it begins with fitful gusts of wind that seem to come from anywhere and disappear just as suddenly and mysteriously. Thus it was on this occasion, and so our party of whites and Indians began to hope that it would amount to but

little, or be so delayed that they could reach their camping place ere any serious danger menaced them.

So they gallantly pushed on across the great bay in the lake, which was many miles in width, and where for hours, even in fine weather, they would be out of sight of land.

Slowly but surely the storm increased. Voyageur gallantly kept up his speed and seemed to know as well as the drivers that no time was to be lost.

The trains were now all fastened together by tying the tail ropes of the sleds ahead to the collars of the dogs coming immediately in the rear. Additional ropes were made secure to the sleds, and as the blizzard in all its fury was now upon them, every person except the experienced Indians was given the end of one of these to hold on to or, if he preferred, to fasten to his sash belt and thus keep him from straying away and being lost.

These precautions were absolutely necessary, as often so dense is the driving snow that a person cannot see many feet in any direction, while at the same time, the roar of the blizzard is so terrible that no human

voice can be heard beyond a very short distance.

Thus tied together as it were, and with old Voyageur courageously leading on, they made as much progress as possible under such discouraging circumstances. When the blizzard had settled down into its genuine form, it was evident that it came principally from the northwest. The result was our party had to travel almost in its very face. At times, however, it so swirled and eddied around them that it seemed to come from every quarter of the heavens at the same moment. This revolving, eddying nature of a blizzard is what constitutes its greatest danger, as it makes the task of keeping in the right direction so much the more difficult as there is not the least vestige of a road, and the view is so limited that it is utterly impossible to see either the sun or any distant landmark to indicate the route in which parties may wish to travel.

However, Voyageur was at the head, and there are times when even a dog's intelligence is more than a match for man's experience.

Fortunately Voyageur, in other years,

had successfully led the way with similar parties, and so now in him all were trusting, even if not one man, white or Indian, could see many yards ahead.

After some hours thus travelling, a halt was called, pemmican bags were opened and other supplies beforehand provided were made available, and each man, as well as he could, in spite of the storm, ate of the nourishing food, so essential to enable him to contend against the fierce storm and the bitter cold.

The journey was then resumed, and for some hours more Voyageur unhesitatingly led them all on, amidst the still raging blizzard. After awhile the increasing darkness told them that the short wintry day was drawing to its close, and that the long night was at hand. This fact naturally created some alarm and caused some of the gentlemen in charge to insist upon something more being done in reference to the route being travelled than by merely trusting to the leadership of a single dog. Quietly the Indians urged that nothing better could be done and that the dog had best be let alone to his own experience and intelligence. But suddenly this also seemed to fail, for un-

expectedly Voyageur, the peerless, stopped in his tracks and deliberately lay down on the ice and snow!

This was indeed a serious matter and one that could not be allowed. Sharp and stern were the orders of the white men in command and so when all words of entreaty and urging could not induce the now apparently sulking balking dog to move on, the heavy whip was brought into requisition and the noble dog was most cruelly beaten. It was noticed and wondered at that even under the heaviest strokes he gave out no cry of pain but in silence took the painful beating. White men, who stood around now full of anger and vexation, cruelly kicked the poor dog but still he would neither move nor give out a sound of pain.

"Paulette!" shouted the white man in charge, "you must go on and lead us. We cannot remain here and freeze to death in this horrible blizzard!"

Paulette, the most experienced guide of his day, quickly responded, and with his quick eye and long experience was able to note the direction in which Voyageur had been leading them, and so, even before the party was ready to follow, he began to push

on ahead in the gloom of that stormy night. He did not, however, go very far before he quickly returned, with a cry of terror and alarm, to his comrades.

"We are on the thin ice over the rapid current of the river," he shouted. "The dog has saved our lives."

It may be necessary here to explain that while many large as well as small rivers run into Lake Winnipeg, it has only one outlet, the great Nelson River. So wide is it at its mouth that in the gloom of night, or when storms like this one are raging, it is quite easy for parties to run out on its frozen surface without observing that they have already left the lake. To do this is, however, safe only when the cold is intense, say from twenty to sixty degrees below zero. But when anything warmer than this, the ice wears thin from below and there is the danger to all who venture on it as the keen-scented, clever Voyageur discovered and refused to pass over.

A very brief investigation showed this to be true, and there was a speedy retreat from such a precarious position to stronger ice.

Fortunately the discovery of the running water under the thin ice indicated the local-

ity, so that a detour to the east soon brought them to the friendly shelter of the forest. Here an abundance of dead trees being found, a roaring camp fire and a good supper soon made them forget their hardships in their gratitude for their deliverance.

Old Voyageur was indeed the hero of the hour, but he sullenly resented any petting for his wonderful display of sagacity, although he did condescend to accept a fine piece of pemmican in addition to his ration of white fish.

X

VOYAGEUR, THE BROKEN-HEARTED

VOYAGEUR had been thoroughly trained by his former master, a Mr. Sinclair of the Hudson's Bay Company, before I bought him. Such was his singular undoglike nature, that while he left his first master without regret he ever treated me with indifference. As a dog outside of his harness he was a nonentity, or rather a puzzle, but when at the head of his train, with every muscle quivering with excitement and ears erect as he eagerly waited for his "Marching orders," he was every inch a dog.

Not until we had lost him did we begin to understand him and realize how that proud position of leadership was all the world to him.

It was with him: "Aut Cæsar aut nullus," so emphatically, that when his supremacy was questioned his proud spirit

scorned any second place, and so he lay down and died.

There was something so pathetic and almost humanly tragic about Voyageur's end that it is sad to write about it especially as I was the innocent cause of it.

Well aware of the short lives of dogs, and thus sadly conscious that Voyageur could not last many years longer, with all his old-time vigour, I was naturally anxious to have some trained successors to take his place. Becoming the fortunate owner of some very fine young St. Bernard dogs, several of which were nearly a year old, I was naturally desirous of breaking them in, and especially of finding out if at least one of them, would develop into a good leader. In the usual way of training they had already had some lessons, and I was much pleased with the docility and intelligence with which they had acted when harnessed up with older dogs. However, up to the time of the strange event I am going to relate, I had never tried any one of them as a leader dog.

The principal supply of white fish on which our own table as well as our dogs depended, was obtained from a fishery fifteen

or twenty miles distant. There the fish were caught in the month of October, just before the ice formed on the waters. Sometimes, indeed, the winter set in early and then, at the cost of a good deal of hardship, the nets had to be set under the ice and kept employed by the Indians until the desired number of these delicious fish was secured.

When caught these fish were either hung upon stagings above the reach of prowling wolves or thievish Eskimo dogs, or else packed away securely in ice.

I had, every October, several thousand of these fish thus caught and secured for me. The severe and steady frost did the work of curing them, as they were frozen as hard as stones and thus kept perfectly fresh and good for several months.

The work of drawing these fish home to our Mission was interesting and pleasant although the return journey with the loaded sleds made it necessary that we should all walk, or rather run, in the usual Indian jog-trot fashion.

As I was arranging for a long journey of several weeks' duration to some remote Indians, which would necessitate my taking with me my best trains, I decided before be-

ginning the trip to drag home all of my fish from the distant fisheries.

We worked with four or five trains for several days and as the weather was brilliantly fine all the time, without any snowfall or blizzard, we soon had a splendid beaten trail.

It was quite customary for a number of my younger dogs to accompany the party on these trips and by their antics and amusing ways to very much break the tediousness of the work, which, after the first journeys, became quite monotonous. Extra harness would sometimes be carried along and occasionally we would harness up some of these younger dogs and thus carry on the work of breaking them in.

One day as we were on the home stretch with our heavy loads I harnessed up a very fine young St. Bernard that had already been partly trained and fastened him in front of Voyageur, thus constituting him leader of the train. Ere I was able to start, I was delayed by having to refasten my load of fish, which had become somewhat loosened.

When ready to start, I shouted:

"Marche!"

To my surprise Voyageur sprang to his work and aided by the strong dogs behind him, was speedily *en route,* while the young dog, with much shortened traces, ran gambolling by the side of the harnessed train. Quickly stopping the sleds I proceeded to investigate, and discovered that while I had been rearranging my load, Voyageur had been busily using his teeth, and had succeeded in cutting off the traces of the dog that I had had the audacity to put in front of him!

I was amused and annoyed—annoyed at having a new harness nearly ruined, and amused at the spirit of the matchless leader of many years thus emphatically resenting the harnessing of a young dog ahead of him.

"Well, old dog," I said, "I'll forgive you this time, but mind, there will be trouble if you do it again."

Then without any difficulty I caught the young dog, and finding that the traces which Voyageur had cut off were still long enough to be available, I once more fastened him at the head of the train. Then as his head was towards home, I shouted, "Marche!" and the excitement began.

The young dog did splendidly, but poor Voyageur was wild and furious. He was most indignant at this insult heaped upon him and was not at all backward in showing his temper. He first tried to get hold of the young dog to thrash him for his impertinence. This the thoroughly frightened young dog did not permit as he took good care to keep his traces so stretched that he was a couple of feet ahead of the teeth of the furious old dog. Failing in this, Voyageur then tried to cut the traces with his teeth as he had done before. This of course I resented, and a couple of cracks from the whip showed the old dog that although I had forgiven him for his first offence in this line, I was in no mood to see my valuable dog harness cut again. Foiled here, the excited dog now made the most desperate efforts to get ahead of the young dog who had thus suddenly supplanted him as leader. But the old dogs behind Voyageur did not enter into his spirit, and as the load of fish was heavy, they saw no reason for any special exertion. They were willing to do their share of the pulling at the ordinary speed, but were not anxious to so exert

themselves with a thousand weight of fish on the sled as to try and run down a young dog, even if old Voyageur did desire it.

Thus completely foiled in this as in every other scheme his dog intellect could devise, Voyageur suddenly collapsed. His proud, eager, ambitious spirit was completely broken. His high head with that ever alert eye went down and the long tail tried to disappear between his hind legs. A look of utter despair, or rather discouragement, took possession of him, and he just mechanically slouched along like a frightened wolf.

Quickly detecting this I at once unharnessed the young dog from before him and thus left him in his coveted place as the leader.

As he still seemed disconsolate I spoke a few cheery words to him:

"Poor old dog, so you don't want a young supplanter to take your place. I am sorry you feel so badly about it and so I will not vex you in this way again."

But it was too late. The mischief was done, Voyageur's heart was broken. He never forgave me, and he never held up his head again with the old-time dash and

vigour. All my sympathetic words were now as mockery. He had never cared much for them; now he seemed to consider them as insults. He never again gave me a kind look or a wag of the tail. He just skulked along home hardly dragging a pound of the load. I had hoped that a night's rest after and a good supper would cause him to forget his annoyance but it was not so. In vain I put on him my best harness decorated with ribbons and silver bells, of which the dogs are so fond. It was of no use. My good wife, who was fond of the noble fellow, and who alone could win from him a half-gracious wag of his tail, tried in vain to rouse him out of his depression. But she too failed like the rest of us. Voyageur was broken-hearted and would cry and moan like a disconsolate child. Shortly after he went out on the frozen lake in the front of our home, and there he set up a most mournful howling. Then he laid down on the ice as though asleep.

Mrs. Young, who had seen him from a window, sent out an old Indian to bring him in. When the man reached him he found the dog dead.

Faithful old dog! He had not enough of the spirit of self humiliation so essential in this modern age, when the inexperienced and immature are preferred before the well tried.

XI

ROVER I, THE SUCCESSFUL DOG DOCTOR

ROVER was a large, beautiful, black and white dog, but he was the most chicken-hearted coward I ever saw. The smallest dog in my pack could make him run and he was never known to show any fight or pugnacity. The very sight of the whip set him off in a paroxysm of howlings, and a stern, sharp reproof was met with any amount of comical dog sobs.

He had a short but very white bushy tail. When in good spirits he carried it very erect, and as it spread out like a fan, it gave him a very laughable appearance.

When quite a young dog, just emerging from puppyhood, he was unfortunately allowed to accompany me one wintry morning when I went out to visit some rabbit snares that had been set a mile or two in the forest behind my Mission home. The young rascal became so interested in the work, that on subsequent occasions he slipped off alone

and helped himself to some of the snared animals. So fond did he become of rabbits for breakfast that I had a good deal of trouble in breaking him of the habit.

Whipping him caused him to howl most dolefully, but his memory proved very short along that line and soon he was as bad as ever. After trying various plans I at length succeeded in curing him in an odd way. Finding him one day in the very act of taking a rabbit out of the snare, I caught him, and in spite of his doleful howlings I tied the dead rabbit securely around his neck and made him wear it for the rest of the day. Most piteously did he plead to have it taken off, but I was obdurate. Vainly he would appeal to my little boy and others to relieve him of his humiliating load. None would listen to his appeals, but, as was arranged, all chided him as a very naughty, thievish dog. When he tried to tear it off with his paws he was whipped, and thus he was obliged to wear it all day. At night I took the rabbit off and gave him a good pelting with it. This punishment completely cured him, and from that day he carefully shunned all rabbit snares.

But in spite of his extreme cowardice and

nervous sensitiveness he was a valuable sleigh dog and had any amount of endurance. Harnessed in a train of four dogs he faithfully did his work and never shirked, as many of the other dogs at times did.

When on my long trips, often of hundreds of miles with four dog trains and three or four Indian companions, the first thing we did when the camping place for the night was selected, was to unharness the dogs. As the camping place in the snow must be dug out and prepared to be our resting place for the night, it was an hour or more before it was possible to thaw out the frozen fish for the hungry dogs' supper. To this delay the dogs became accustomed, and in various ways employed themselves until the scent of the thawing fish brought them in hungry groups as near to the blazing camp fire as possible.

Some of the younger animals with hunting instincts, got up a rabbit hunt, as at certain parts of the country, during some winters, the rabbits swarmed in vast multitudes. Rover had had enough of rabbit experiences and so never bothered himself with any hunting excursions. He did, however, amuse and interest us with his elabo-

rate preparations for his night's lodgings. Shortly after he was unharnessed and the location of the camp decided upon, Rover would deliberately make a tour round the whole place. He would carefully inspect the different hollows and dense balsam trees that were near at hand. Then he would, if there was to us seemingly little or no wind, get up on some snow-covered rock or fallen tree and there sniff until he had exactly found the direction from which the air was coming. In this I never knew him to be at fault. So calm at times was the air that the smoke and sparks from our camp fire ascended so perpendicularly that apparently there was not the slightest movement in the atmosphere. Yet Rover selected his camping place on the lee side so accurately that when, as it often happened some hours after, the wind rose, it never caught him sleeping in an exposed place. How he was able to thus be prepared against being caught exposed to a biting wind, was among the mysteries of animal instinct.

When the cosy sheltered spot was after much deliberation thus decided upon, Rover set to work to make it habitable according to his ability. First he carefully pawed

down through the deep snow until he reached the ground. If bulging roots or hard uneven ground or sharp pointed stones were met with, he would at first with his teeth try to remove them. If in this he failed, he shifted his ground until he was satisfied, then with a grunt of great satisfaction, he curled round and round in his thus carefully prepared nest and rested until the welcome call to supper brought him, with the others, to their different Indian drivers to receive each the allowance of two well thawed white fish. This was the only meal of the twenty-four hours, and so was much prized.

Big and apparently powerful as Rover was, his driver had to keep a vigilant watch, or the good-natured fellow would in all probability be robbed of one of his fish by some cunning rascal of a dog from another train. He was always a dainty, slow eater. He ate his supper with great delight and accompanied each morsel torn off and devoured, with most amusing grunts or snorts of satisfaction. So leisurely did he thus take his supper, that he was invariably the last dog to finish. This was often an annoyance to his driver, especially as he was

never supposed to take his own supper until all of his dogs were fed. When at length Rover had eaten his full allowance he would leisurely return to his carefully prepared nest-like resting place in the snow, and almost invariably he found it occupied.

Then the fun began. The intruder was generally one of the lively dogs that had been off rabbit hunting, until the loud call for supper had speedily brought him back. Quickly had he devoured his meal and then finding this cosy resting-place, so carefully prepared by Rover, he had taken possession and here he was comfortably stowed away, as he imagined, for the night.

Not so, however, thought Rover. He was in no humour to be thus deprived of his choicely selected and laboriously prepared nest. It was most amusing to watch his efforts to get the intruder out. But as the nest was perhaps two or three feet deep, and the other dog was inside and was showing a set of glittering teeth, and uttering some ominous growls poor Rover at the top could only muster up courage enough to look down at him and say: "Bow-wow-wow!"

Little cared the interloper for these "Bow-wow-wows," which he knew Rover

had not courage enough to follow up with any vigourous attacks, and so he merely showed his teeth and uttered a growl or two of defiance. He seemed to say: "I've got possession—get me out if you can!" For some minutes Rover would thus protest in all the dog-entreating words which he had in his limited vocabulary, and who knows but he added a few stronger ones? When he saw that all these efforts failed, he invariably came for me.

When we saw him coming, which always afforded great fun to the Indians, I would purposely move round the fire in and out of the camp, on different sides, or go in and out among the dog sleds. Still doggedly would Rover follow me up until I felt I had tried his persistence quite long enough, when I would stop. Then with a "yow! yow! yow!" he would seize the fringe of my moose skin leather coat, and with a gentle yet firm tug, lead me to the spot where he had prepared his nest at such trouble for his night's rest, but which was now in the possession of an intruder. Rover would not let go of me until he had brought me to the very edge of the nest. Then in his comical, plaintive language, he would direct my at-

tention to this lamentable state of affairs and beg for my helpful intervention.

A good stick or whip, well applied, soon made the saucy interloper leap out and skulk away in the gloom, while grateful Rover with some sincere "Bow-wows" of gratitude would spring into his nest and quickly curl himself down with his short bushy tail over his nose, and was soon enjoying his much needed rest.

When Rover was five or six years old he constituted himself the surgeon doctor of all my other dogs. It was most interesting and sometimes comical to see him in actual practice. Four years of good faithful service had somewhat stiffened him up, and so he was now only used for short journeys, and in the trains required to draw wood for the fires in our church, school house, and Mission home, from the distant forest. So he now had a much easier time and lots of leisure.

When the dogs arrived at home after hard, long trips, it was most interesting to see how Rover took into his special care those that had wounds of any kind upon them, and often some of them returned sadly used up. Sometimes there were neck

sores and sometimes others, of which we knew not the cause. Then there would be others that were caused by frost-bites as well as poor bleeding feet in spite of all the protection afforded by the warm dog shoes.

To these suffering, gallant dogs, Rover's services were simply invaluable. Nature has so arranged that a dog's tongue is his great instrument for cleansing and healing his wounds. When a dog is wounded where he cannot reach with his tongue, it generally gangrenes and death ensues sooner or later. It was in such cases that Rover's kindly and persistent attentions were of great value. He saved for me many a dog.

The instant a dog was unharnessed, Rover, who was always friendly with all my dogs, would at once overhaul him and would thus quickly find the galled or wounded spots. Very gently then he licked them even if at first the dog-patient should resent his interference, and that sometimes with much fierceness. This did not at all disturb Rover. I have seen him just simply lie down at the feet of the dog and wait for his anger to pass and then get up and again begin his cleansing the wound. No rebuff or even a shaking, would discourage him. He

seemed to say: "That wound must be attended to and I am going to do the work;" and do it he did, and it was well and thoroughly done.

After a while the dogs seemed to know that this was Rover's work, and then they expected him to take care of them. The only growls he now heard were from dogs with their first wounds. After that they would patiently stand or comically lie down or roll over as Rover desired.

Some of them became so accustomed to his attentions, that they simply imposed on him. For example, I have seen dogs with sore feet, instead of using their own tongues in cleansing and curing them, come and drop down before faithful old Rover and stick out their wounded foot for his inspection and treatment.

Faithful old Rover! He seemed to realize that great indeed was his responsibility when I would return from a month's trip into the interior with twelve or sixteen dogs. Four at least he would find required his attentions and care for the next ten days or so.

Thus Rover, the greatest coward I ever knew in dog flesh, and the steady, faithful

sleigh-dog, became what the Indians called, "Muskeke Atim," the dog-doctor.

That terrible curse of northern dogs, the distemper, seized him for a victim, and with sorrow we had to bury Rover and many of his comrades.

XII

ROVER II, ALSO CALLED KIMO

ROVER number two, or Kimo, as he was called by the Indians, was a beautiful Newfoundland dog given to me by the Rev. Dr. Mark, of Ottawa.

My first introduction to him was a unique and exciting one. At Ottawa he was packed in a large box-like case and forwarded by express to me at the city of Hamilton, Ontario, where I was then staying and making my final arrangements for my return to the Red River. In those days there were three changes necessary on the railroad between Ottawa and Hamilton, and as there were long delays on the route it was the third day ere the dog arrived at his destination. No one had looked after him and so he had had neither food nor drink.

The result was he had become simply furious with his confinement and neglect. At Hamilton, he acted so wildly and violently that four expressmen were needed to

get him up to the residence of Mr. Sanford. The plan they adopted showed that they were much afraid of the angry dog. They procured two long pieces of scantling, and placing them parallel on the ground, they succeeded in getting the box on the middle. Then each man taking an end, they placed the case, with its contents, on a large flat express waggon and took it to its destination. Here they drove it into the yard, and in the same cautious way they were lifting the box, dog and all, to the ground, when fortunately I happened to come along, and noticing that there was some excitement, I naturally asked what was the matter.

The reply was given in rather vigourous language, as they described the difficulties they had had in bringing up that savage dog to the house from the railroad station.

"Is he not securely boxed up?" was my next question.

"It is about the 'securely' of it, that we have been bothered" said one. "The fact is he has been making such desperate efforts to get out of that box, that we were fearful that he might succeed, and if he did—well, I did not want to be around there just then."

I watched them with a certain amount of

amusement as I saw the actual terror of these men, for a glance showed me, that big as the dog was, he was so securely fastened in the great case that he was powerless to injure them.

After a lot of delays and time-wasting movements, they succeeded in placing the box on the ground and then one of them, producing his express book from his pocket, asked me whether I knew who the owner of the dog was, or whether there was some one there at the house with sufficient authority to sign the receipt form for the brute's delivery.

"The dog is mine, and I will sign your book," I answered.

"The dog yours!" they said in astonishment. "Why then, in all creation," said one of the men to me, with more amazement than politeness, "did not you speak to him to quiet him."

"Because," I replied, "I never saw the dog before. He was given to me by a friend in Ottawa, and your company or the railway have kept him for about three days on the route, and he is now about wild, as you see, with hunger, thirst and the irksome confinement."

"Well, what are you going to do with him?"

"First of all," I replied, "I am going to get him out of that big box."

"Going to do it alone?" one of them asked.

"Yes, I am," I answered.

"Well, just wait until we get out of this, will you?"

"Certainly," I replied, "but hurry, for the poor dog has been in there long enough."

So while I made preparations to relieve the dog, these four men threw the scantlings on the wagon, and turning the horses around, drove out of the yard. Then shutting the high, close gate, they took their position on the top of the wall to see me "devoured by that dog," as one of them put it.

From my knowledge of dog nature, I had all confidence in the quick and prompt plan I was going to adopt, and which I was not long in putting into practice.

Going into the kitchen I obtained from the cook a generous dish of cold meat. The gardener furnished me with an axe and the stable boy with a large bucket of cold water.

Placing the meat and water where I could

put my hand on them, the instant I wanted them, I quietly approached the box. Addressing the dog by the name given me in Dr. Mark's letter, I began to talk kindly to him, and also to vigourously cut into the back of that big, firm packing case.

At first, every blow and word seemed to make the dog, if possible, more wild and furious. At every blow struck on the outside of the box, he would spring at the place inside, until now my fears were aroused lest I should, as my axe cut through, badly injure him.

So cautiously, as well as rapidly, I rained the blows upon the box until piece after piece began to fly off.

All this time I was talking to him, and telling him that he had been treated most shamefully but his troubles would soon be over, that I would soon have him out, and that I had plenty of food and water for him.

When the boards began to split open and pieces to fly off from the back, and Rover saw the daylight, for the first time there, coming in, there was at once a change in him. Here he saw an opening for his escape, and in his anxiety to get out, his growls and angry barkings rapidly moderated.

Still soothingly talking to him, I kept cutting away until I saw where, with a strong wrench with my hand, I could pull off enough of the board to get him out. So dropping my axe and placing the pail of water close at hand, I suddenly jerked back the board and putting in my hand I caught the dog, now frantic with excitement at the prospect of immediate deliverance, by his collar, and helped him out of the box.

"Poor dog, it was a shame to so abuse you! Come along here is a good drink for you!" and almost before he knew where he was, I had his head in that pail of water, and for the first time in my life I saw a dog drink like a horse.

How he did enjoy it! It seemed as though he could not have enough. When I saw he was about satisfied, I had my meat dish handy, and I fed him out of my hand, piece after piece. It was well there was a large supply, for he was a big dog and of course very hungry. When thoroughly satisfied, he looked around and tried to take in the situation. It seemed to me that about all he just then cared to realize was that he had been in a horrid prison, thirsty and starving, and that I had come as his de-

liverer. I let him walk around the yard, then he went and had a good smell at that now smashed prison house, and then he came to me. His wagging tail and his great, intelligent eyes, now so full of gratitude, told their own tale. We were friends, the warmest of friends, from that hour to the end.

"That beats Barnum," said one of the four men, as they all clambered down off the wall and returned to their work.

That evening Rover and I took a long walk through the streets of the city of Hamilton. He kept close to my heels and did not seem to desire to see any other person than his new master who had come to his rescue and deliverance.

He was a strong, faithful dog to the end, and always happiest when I was in sight. To train him to work as a sleigh dog all I had to do was to harness him up with three trained dogs and then go myself on ahead with another train. That was enough for Rover. He heard his loved master's voice in front, and his joy was ever to respond, and so on he would come, and fleet indeed must be the train I was driving, or very slow the

dogs with which Rover was harnessed, ere he would be left behind.

Rover, like all of my civilized dogs, had not the hard, firm, compact feet of the Huskies. Hence, for him and others, I had to be prepared to overcome this defect as far as possible.

Various expedients have been devised, but we found that the best plan was to have a large stock of dog-shoes with us on every trip. These shoes were made of a firmly woven warm woollen cloth called duffle. The shoes were shaped very much like a man's mitten without the thumb. They were of various sizes so as to fit snugly to the injured foot, whether large or small.

Some winters there would be comparatively few injuries or frozen feet among my dogs. Then perhaps the very next season, hardly a dog escaped. While as a general thing these injuries were confined to my imported dogs or their descendants, yet there were winters when almost every dog I owned suffered, and all vied with each other in calls for the comfortable woollen shoes to be put on their feet.

The injuries to their feet from which they

suffered were various. Sometimes a dog would freeze one of his feet. When this was found out—and as a general thing the dog was not slow to let us know of his trouble—we built a fire, and placing him near it on a deer skin, he, with his tongue and the heat, soon got the frost out of it. When this had been accomplished, we carefully tied a comfortable shoe upon it and generally he would be all right in a few days. This, however, was not always the case. I have had dogs with feet festered and bleeding for weeks from these cruel freezings. We were thankful when we were able to reach home and let the faithful animals rest for weeks, attended to most skillfully by Rover, the unique dog doctor, whose death is recorded in the previous chapter. Some dogs have very brittle nails. These are frequently breaking off in the rough trails, or getting torn out at the roots, thus making an ugly, painful wound. The ice on the great lakes and rivers is sometimes rough and very trying to the dogs. Even when it is smooth and glassy it at times affects them so that the pads of their feet become sore and bleed. The soft, warm dog-shoes were our remedies for all of these ills, and the sagacious dogs that had

once enjoyed their benefits, were not slow in demanding them when they thought they were in need of them.

We had some difficulty, at first, in making some of the more nervous or suspicious dogs understand that these shoes were for their good. There were those who would endeavour to tear them from their feet, and had to be watched and even punished for so doing. However, it was not long before even these, having found out the comfort there was in them, were now willing to resort to all sorts of schemes and expedients to induce us to put these comfortable shoes on their suffering feet.

Rover soon became an adept in asking for his shoes. He was not satisfied with them on the one or two feet that seemed to need them. He decidedly thought that "prevention was better than cure," and so he wanted shoes on all his feet, every day we were travelling on long journeys. It was interesting to see how he would wait until we were ready to harness up the dogs, then he would deliberately throw himself on his back, and putting up his feet, eloquently even if mutely, thus plead for his warm shoes.

I did not have him very long. That fatal

scourge of the dogs of the Northland, the distemper, robbed me of one of the truest, noblest dogs I ever harnessed. I made a large log-heap fire and tried to cremate him, but some starving pagan Indians dragged his big body out of the flames and feasted on it. Poor old Rover!

XIII

MUFF, THE AFFECTIONATE MOTHER DOG

MUFF, with two other beautiful St. Bernard dogs, was given to me by Mrs. Andrew Allan, of Montreal.

I received them at the close of a long series of lecture engagements in Ontario and Quebec, and ere the winter ended I started on my return trip to my Mission home, which was then at Beren's River on the eastern shore of Lake Winnipeg.

So anxious was I to utilize the dogs that I took Muff and Rover, through with me. We travelled by rail to Morehead in Minnesota, and then by stage, on runners, the last two or three hundred miles, to Winnipeg. The other dogs received from Mrs. Allan were brought through later in the year by Mrs. Young.

On a railroad somewhere in the West, an amusing adventure occurred with the dogs. I had left them in the baggage car in charge of the baggage man, and had also left with

him a well-filled basket of cooked meat for their food. As a precautionary measure the baggage man had fastened the dogs' chains to a couple of large trunks.

For hours we had sped along, and the train men and dogs had apparently become great friends. All at once I was speedily aroused by the conductor rushing into the long car where I was sitting with many other passengers, and shouting out:

"Where is the gentleman who owns those big dogs in the baggage car?"

Of course I was instantly on my feet and full of wonder and concern about my dogs.

Without a word of explanation, the conductor, hearing my response that the dogs were mine, at once said: "Come with me as quickly as you can." The train was, as American cars all are, open from end to end, and so I speedily followed on after him. When we reached the baggage car, as we opened the door no explanation was needed to tell what was the matter, for there stood the big dogs, now bravely defending the trunks to which they had been tied, and in a way that made the stalwart baggage man keep at a respectful distance. It seems that as we were now near to the town where those

trunks were to be put off, the baggage man had attempted to remove the dogs to another place and then to take possession of those trunks. This the dogs would not permit, and so, in spite of all his coaxings, and then threats, the dogs stood on their guard and succeeeded in keeping him at bay. Of course, I speedily quieted the dogs and the trunks were released.

At Winnipeg I found awaiting me my dog trains and drivers. As soon as supplies could be obtained and harnesses made for Muff and Rover, we started north. The young dogs speedily became accustomed to the work and did well.

We reached our destination in March, having still several weeks in which to utilize the dogs at the work which was then engrossing my attention. This was the hauling of logs and timber from a distant island out in the lake to the mainland where we were establishing the Mission.

Muff proved to be a most reliable dog. She was not only powerful and enduring to work in harness but the traits she had exhibited in the railway car were so strong in her that when I wished to put anything under guard from prowling dogs or other

intruders, Muff was the guardian generally selected, and faithfully and well would she do her duty. Once put in charge of the tools or supplies of food or left in charge of the campfire, where the men took their meals when out chopping wood in the forest, she would not allow any strange man or dog to come near.

It was primitive work, thus toiling with my Indians in securing the needed timber for our houses. Every stick cut and hewn had to be dragged by the dogs about a dozen miles; yet six dogs would take a green stick of spruce or balsam ten inches square and thirty-six feet long and drag it at a jog-trot speed to the place selected for the erection of our church and parsonage.

Muff was one of my most willing dogs. Indeed, she was too eager and, as we shall see, about ruined herself because of it. She became the mother of some beautiful puppies, and so affectionate were her motherly instincts towards them that she seemed to think just as much of them long after they were weaned and had grown up into dogs. She was unhappy if separated from them, and fretted until she was again among them. This made it a matter of regret when she had

to be harnessed up and sent off in trains with other dogs. She would tug at her collar most desperately and was ever anxious to be home again.

The last long trip, on which she almost crippled herself for life, was one which I made into the Red River Settlement in company with my beloved fellow missionary in that Indian work, the Rev. John Semmens. We started with a couple of other missionaries, but as they preferred to ride a great deal, their progress was much slower than ours. We pushed on as rapidly as we thought was right and reached civilization much sooner than they did and thus escaped a terrible storm that tried them and their dogs and the Indian guides, most severely.

Near Lower Fort Garry we were most hospitably entertained by the Hon. Mr. Sifton and his delightful family. There we exchanged out leather suits for ministerial black and in civilized costume, went up to Winnipeg, then a rising little village.

Here we attended to the duties that had brought us into the abodes of civilization, and then on the following Saturday returned to Mr. Sifton's home, where we had left our dogtrains and Indian outfits. We

spent a very restful Sabbath together, and then at midnight Mrs. Sifton had a warm meal prepared for us two missionaries and our two faithful guides who were with us.

Mr. Semmens and I then retired to our rooms, but soon after returned in our costumes, so different from our clerical black that our own mothers would hardly have recognized us. But these suits in which we were now robed, although of fur and moose or reindeer skin, were exactly suited for the work we were doing and the life we were living.

We found that our trusty Indians had our sleds carefully packed, our now well-rested, impatient dogs harnessed, and so there was nothing for us to do but to commend this kind, hospitable family to God's blessing, to say our "Good-byes," and to be off.

It was a bitter cold night. The wintry winds howled and shrieked and the cold stars seemed to pity us. It did seem hard and cruel to leave that warm, cosy home and be compelled to start at one o'clock that cold Monday morning out on our long, long journey of hundreds of miles over the snowy waste.

My home, fortunately for me, was then

only about two hundred miles distant but my beloved friend had to travel seven hundred miles by dog train ere he would reach his far away log cabin on the Burnt-wood River.

Muff was my sleigh dog on this trip, and grandly did she do her work. So wild was she as the days passed and she knew that she was nearing home and her puppies, although they had long since been weaned and were now quite fine large dogs, that it seemed impossible to restrain her. Our loads were very heavy, averaging nearly a thousand pounds to each sled, as, of course, we availed ourselves of these visits to civilization to replenish our never overabundant supplies.

The trained Indians run all the time when on these trips, no matter whether the sleds are loaded or not. As a general thing we missionaries could ride on the sleds, if they were not too heavily loaded, when we travelled on the ice. In the woods, however, where the snow was deep, everybody was expected to walk on ahead in Indian file in their snow-shoes and thus make the trail or path on which the faithful dogs dragged the heavy loads.

This was very hard work, and so a halt was frequently called. As the Indians are all smokers, of course at these delays the pipe was immediately filled and smoked. Some Hudson's Bay traders were in the habit of marking the day by saying it was so many "pipes" long, meaning that they with their Indian dog-drivers had stopped so many times to rest and smoke.

Muff did not like these delays. She was eager to be on the "go" continually. Sometimes she would show her spirit by refusing either to lie down or even to sit down on her haunches which is the general custom of the dogs when a halt is called.

The instant the rest was ended and the journey was resumed, she was simply wild with delight. In the most frantic way would she spring to her work and anticipate the movements of the more sedate and less excitable dogs.

Poor Muff! alas, she did this once too often! For as one bitter cold morning we were about starting from the camp where the sled was deeply imbedded in the snow and her companion dogs in the train were slow in coming to her help, she plunged so desperately at her work that she snapped

her collar bone. With a pitiful cry, that sounded almost human, as she seemed to realize her helplessness, she sank down in her traces in the snow.

We quickly examined her, and to our great sorrow found that the clavicle was completely broken and the jagged ends were so bent back and pressed into the flesh as, doubtless, to be causing intense suffering.

As gently as possible we unharnessed her, and placing her on a robe spread out in the snow, we replaced the two broken pieces of the bone in position.

It must have hurt her very much, but patient, intelligent Muff seemed to know that we would do the best we could, and so there was not a growl or any resistance. It was but little that we could do for her in such a place, and anyway as a sleigh dog she was completely worthless to us now.

What is to be done? was the question. The Indians only thought of the one plan that was the universal one among them when such an accident happened under similar circumstances. That was to kill the dog at once and go on with the thus diminished train. We had known Hudson's Bay traders to start off on a long trip with sixteen dogs

and come back with only twelve. The other four had met with accidents and had to be killed. The general way of disposing of a dog thus injured was to have one of the Indians kill him with one swift blow of the heavy axe.

Never imagining that any other fate than this was in store for Muffy, one of the Indians had quietly unfastened the largest axe from one of the sleds and with his comrade was now only awaiting my orders to kill my unfortunate dog.

"Put up your axe," I almost shouted. "That may be your way but it is not mine. Muff is not going to be killed if I can help it."

Wondering what I was going to do, they put up the axe and then, as I ordered, they gently lifted the wounded dog into my cariole, and there among the robes we laid her down in as comfortable a position as possible. We got her home all right. But it meant that I had to walk or run as did my Indian guide as least one hundred miles. It was very fatiguing and exhausting work.

The two nights we had to camp, Muff shared with me my camp bed among the fur robes.

During our last night's peculiar adventure on that journey, Muff showed that even if suffering from a broken clavicle, she was still the alert and vigilant watch-dog.

When we had reached a point about twenty miles from my mission house, night was coming on. The stars were beginning to shine and the spectral auroras were flashing their cold and ghostly lights athwart the northern skies. The question of camping or going on had been debated as we had stopped where we had found a little dry wood. Making a fire on a spot from which our snow-shoes had scraped away the snow, we made some refreshing tea for ourselves.

The Indians and myself were eager to push on and finish the journey, even if we were very tired and footsore. But my beloved brother missionary was about done out. As his sled was heavily loaded with supplies for his distant mission, he had bravely kept steps with the best Indian runners and had ridden but very little indeed. As a natural result, his feet were swollen and blistered, and every bone and muscle in his body seemed to cry for rest. So when he saw that we were resolved on continuing the journey until we reached our home

rather than go to the worry and trouble of preparing another winter camp, he cried out in his agony:

"Throw me out a blanket and some pemmican and let me stay here. I can go no farther. You have your wives and children to lure you on but I have none. Go on and leave me here."

"No, indeed, my brother," I said, "we are going on, but we are not going to leave you here. I have a better plan than that."

"Well, do what you like, but I cannot walk any farther to-night." And saying this, he threw himself down on the ice in his weariness and pain.

Very quickly did I arrange my plans. Telling two Indians to bring the axes and their snowshoes, we walked towards the woods until we found a drift of snow, packed hard and firm by the successive winds, blowing in from the lake.

On this we set to work, and by chopping the snow and then throwing it out with our snowshoe shovels, we soon had a large hole about four feet across and as many feet deep. Then my dog train of three dogs was driven along side of this and the sled unloaded.

We first threw into this hole in the snow,

some robes. Arranging them in position, we there carefully deposited Muff. We so arranged the top buffalo skin that she was well covered up except her head. Then we carefully piled around her the heavy articles of our load, and left her in charge.

As great northern wolves were sometimes known to infest that part of the country, my Indians and I tramped around a good deal in the snow. We did this to keep the wolves away, as they are very suspicious about human tracks that are under twenty-four hours old, and I knew that in less than that time I would have Muff relieved.

Muff having been thus well attended to, I drove my dog-sled alongside of my tired out beloved brother, and with the aid of my Indians, placed him on my sled and carefully wrapped him up in robes. At once he fell into a dreamless sleep.

Then we resumed our journey. We did not travel very fast. We were very weary, as before beginning this home stretch of twenty miles, we had already travelled sixty or seventy miles that day. However, the longest journey has an end and so had this one.

We met with a cordial reception when we

could get the sleeping ones awake, who little expected us at the unseemly hour at which we arrived.

The tired missionary was aroused from his deep sleep. His wounds were soothed with ointment. Then a hot bath and a warm supper were both enjoyed and then the comfortable bed, in which he had twelve hours of blessed sleep without once waking. But when he did again join us he was refreshed and renewed in spirits and in bodily vigour, and once again he was the same genial, delightful man.

Muff, however, was in the meantime not forgotten. No sooner were we safely at home and the wants of the missionaries and the splendid Indian comrades and dogs looked after, than I gave instructions that Kennedy, my faithful man of all work about the mission, should be off with a fresh train of strong dogs to bring home both Muff and the supplies she was guarding.

He started at four o'clock in the morning and so reached her about daylight. But strange to say Muff at first would not let him touch her or any of the supplies. This very much annoyed Kennedy and he was inclined to fight her, but he was a kind hearted

man and I had told him of her sad accident. So he had to put his Indian wits to work, and the plan which he adopted and which proved successful was to unharness a couple of his dogs that were trusty and let them run to where Muff was still so watchfully guarding the supplies left in her charge. The affectionate dogs were fond of Muff, and as they, regardless of her growls, which at first she tried to keep up, rushed up to her, she seemed quickly to realize that they and Kennedy were her friends, and her opposition ceased.

About noon she was safely installed in a cosy spot in the kitchen. The bones overlapped a little and then knit together. Of course I never took her again on a long trip, but she did some work in light trains about the place, and her many puppies developed into strong, splendid dogs, and so I was glad that I had not killed her at the time of the accident, as my Indians thought that I ought to have done.

XIV

CÆSAR, THE CLEVER RASCAL

CÆSAR was a mongrel dog with St. Bernard and Eskimo blood in his veins. He was a large, powerful dog and able to do any amount of work, but he was a cunning shirk and required constant watching or, while making a great pretence in his traces, he would not be drawing a pound.

From his early puppyhood days he was full of tricks. One that I saw him perform when he was only four months old very much amused me. Unknown to him I watched the whole performance from my study window. It was in the winter and the snow was deep upon the ground. Indian men were busily engaged with my dog trains in dragging from the distant forest the yearly supply of wood required for our church, parsonage, and school-house. Bearing in mind the length and severity of the winters in that cold Northland, and that we

had no coal, it will be seen at once that we required a very large quantity. So in securing the needed supply there was much labour for both men and dogs.

During this hard work of dragging home these heavy loads of wood, the dogs were fed on what were called full rations, which was, two good white fish each a day. Martin Papanekis, one of the most trustworthy servants a man ever employed, had the oversight of the work and was specially responsible for seeing that the dogs were well looked after and that each one received his full rations. This was a matter that had to be attended to at each feeding time. If it was neglected and the greatest vigilance not exercised, the more powerful and greedy dogs would quickly rob the weaker ones. As the fish were frozen like rocks, Martin's usual plan was to place, in the morning, a dozen of these large fish in a sheet-iron square pan under our kitchen stove. The rest required were thawed elsewhere. The heat of the stove would not only thaw out these fish, but by the time they were required in the evening when the dogs had finished their day's work, they were half cooked and thus rendered much more palatable to the dogs.

One evening, when Martin had brought home his last load of wood and unharnessed the six splendid dogs he had been using, he naturally looked under the big stove for the fish. Not finding them there, he turned to the Indian servant girl and demanded of her what she had done with his dogs' fish.

Mary was quick tempered and not liking the tone in which Martin had spoken to her about his fish, petulantly replied:

"I wanted to scrub my kitchen floor and as your dirty smelling fish were in the way, I shoved them, pan and all, out of doors."

This answer made Martin very angry, but in his anxiety to look after his dogs' supper, he without reply rushed out in search of the missing fish. He had no difficulty in finding the big square pan, but there was not a fish in it. Around it were gathered his hungry, disconsolate dogs, but while there was the generally well-filled pan, it was now as destitute of food as the historic cupboard of the famous Old Mother Hubbard.

The puzzling question then was: What has become of the dozen of large fish? All the other dogs were being fed elsewhere and the only loose dog around was the little insignificant puppy, that they were beginning

to call Cæsar. And yet that little puppy called Cæsar, small as he then was, had carried away and most cunningly buried all those missing fish—and I had been the amused spectator of the whole transaction.

How had he done it? About an hour before I had, from my study window, observed Mary the Indian servant girl, shove the large pan of fish out of the kitchen door. Shortly after I heard the most comical howlings imaginable. These odd sounds, of course, at once excited my curiosity, and on going to the window to investigate, there was before me a most amusing sight. The puppy had literally taken possession of that whole pan of fish. He would stand on one side of them and howl for gladness. Then he would march around the whole and have another howl of delight. He was simply wild with joy at being the undisputed possessor of such an unlimited supply of food. He was too much delighted even to begin to eat. The fact of being "monarch of all he surveyed" was quite enough bliss for him.

But what was that? He heard the distant barkings of dogs and at once his whole demeanour changed. He seemed at once to be conscious that he was in danger of losing

his great prize, and realized that if he was going to keep possession of it, he must speedily hide it away from all intruders.

And young puppy though he was, he began most vigourously at his work. Seizing the fish nearest to him by the head, he dragged it perhaps fifty feet away to a spot where the snow was deep and light. Here with his little paws he set to work, and soon had a hole large enough, into which he skillfully pushed the fish. Then with his nose, he carefully covered it up with the light dry snow. Quickly rushing back to the pan, he seized hold of another one, and dragging it in another direction, he buried it in a similar manner. Thus the plucky little fellow worked unceasingly until he had the whole dozen of those large white-fish thus "cached" away in different places. So cunningly had he hidden them that there was not the slightest trace of his work visible.

When Martin returned with his dogs and as usual unharnessed them in the yard, Cæsar had the meekest look imaginable. He was too guileless for anything. Then when the hungry dogs discovered the empty fish pan still rich with the fragrance of the

fish which were not there, the young hypocrite coolly seemed to sympathize with them in the loss of their supper. It was indeed most consummate acting. It was amusing, however, when I went out and told Martin what I had witnessed from my study window. The worry about his dogs' supper left his face at once, and he shrewdly remarked:

"Well, that pup will make a clever dog, perhaps too clever sometimes for his driver."

Prophetic words were these, and remembered in after days.

The question now however was, how are the hungry dogs to get those buried fish?

"Very easily," said Martin. "See how I will make the little thief tell in his own way, where he has 'cached' them." Quietly calling one of the hungry dogs to follow him, Martin started off to a spot where the snow looked as though it had recently been disturbed.

Marvellous and sudden was the transformation in Cæsar. His assumed meekness suddenly left him, and now, with neck hair ruffled and tail stiffly curled up, the gritty little fellow is going to fight for what cost him such trouble to secure.

When Martin stopped before the "cache,"

ere he had stirred a snow flake, the brave little dog sprang before him and planting himself upon the spot, began growling most comically. One word to the big dog at Martin's heels was sufficient and with a rush he fairly tumbled the little fellow over in the snow, and then quickly dug up the fish.

Speedily were the other dogs sent smelling round, and soon fish after fish was recovered.

Poor little Cæsar was simply frantic. He rushed from cache to cache, but all in vain. The dogs were too much for him, and although none of them would bite the little fellow, yet the frequent tumblings he got in the deep snow very much ruffled his dignity. In spite of all his cleverness and trouble, he lost all of his fish, and later on in the evening he was humble enough to come to the kitchen door and beg for some supper. This was freely given to him as a small return for the amusement he had afforded.

Cæsar grew to be a large, strong dog and in due time was broken in to harness. I had some trouble in breaking him in to work. He was stubborn and obstinate. He would throw himself down on the ground and would let the dogs in front of him drag him

in that way for hundreds of yards. He cared but little for the whip, and under its infliction would lie down and sulk.

However, at length I thought of a plan which when tried proved successful, not only in his case but in that of many other dogs that were at first not disposed to take kindly to the harness.

My dogs were generally harnessed in tandem style. When breaking in a young dog, I usually had three powerful old animals harnessed in front of him, and one or even two good dogs behind him. This was the plan I tried with Cæsar. The dog I had harnessed immediately behind him was Jack. It is hardly needless to say that of him every dog stood in dread, when once his ominous growls were heard. Harnessing Cæsar up in this powerful train, I then shouted, "Marche!" and the sport began. Cæsar was as obstinate as he could be. First he made the most desperate efforts to get out of his harness. But against this I had carefully guarded. A dog that has once succeeded in squeezing himself out of his harness, when being broken in, is likely to try the trick again, where perhaps his escape may be most annoying and inconvenient.

Foiled in his efforts in this direction, he next tried the obstinate dodge of balking. He threw himself on the snow and, refusing to move, was dragged along by the three strong dogs in front of him. It was now high time for Jack to interfere, and so I shouted: "Shake him, Jack!" Permission was all that Jack had been waiting for. With a roar like a lion he sprang at the obstinate Cæsar, harnessed directly in front of him, and, seizing him by the back, gave him a good shaking. Poor Cæsar, securely harnessed up and being dragged along by dogs in front was powerless to resist, yet so obstinate was he, that he took that shaking without yielding. The fact is, I don't think Jack hurt him very much. But he must be conquered and so I shouted to Jack: "Go for him again!"

This time Jack adopted an entirely different method, and one that proved completely successful. Instead of seizing hold of Cæsar's great body, he began nipping, with his sharp teeth, at his legs and feet, that were stretched out behind, as the dogs in front were dragging him along.

Jack must now have bitten him pretty

vigourously, for before he had received more than half a dozen nips, he sprang up and with howls of rage and fear started off with such speed that if Jack had not held him back, he would have run over the dogs in front of him. A few more lessons were all that were necessary and then Cæsar became one of my best dogs. But he had some tricks that he liked to play off when he dared, and so, although he was a very clever dog, he was one that was better for being well watched and rather sternly handled. Still I was fond of him and travelled thousands of miles with him as one of my train. Yet even to the last he was sometimes too clever for me, as the following incident will show.

I had extended the borders of my mission field until it was now larger than many a State. Over this large domain I travelled in summer in my birch canoe. But from October until May, the only possible way of communication except by going on foot, was by dog travelling. With thousands of miles of travel every winter thus before me, through those unbeaten wilds, it can be seen why I was so anxious to secure the best dogs possible. Even with the very best I could ob-

tain, there were times when some of them would sadly disappoint me, as cunning Cæsar did on this occasion.

I was making a journey to one of my remote stations where the route was very heavy. My sleds were fully loaded, as the people to whom I was going were very poor, and as yet not any too friendly towards the missionary. So as a precautionary measure, I was loaded with sufficient supplies for both the outward and homeward trip. Before starting, I had kept my dogs in their kennels and had fed them up until they were all in first-class condition. So in good spirits we began the long journey of several hundred miles. Soon, however, we all began to feel the effects of the toilsome way through the deep snow. There was not the faintest trace of a road or path. It was uphill and downhill; over rocks and fallen trees; now struggling through dense underbrush and then across rough frozen muskegs. And the snow was everywhere; a great mantle of the purest whiteness covering everything to a depth of from three to six feet, and through it we struggled on and on for days and days. With axes on our shoulders and snow-shoes on our feet, the men of our party pushed on

ahead to make some sort of a trail along which the dogs could drag the heavy loads.

Is it any wonder that men and dogs began to feel the strain of such continuous hardships and that all of them were much reduced in weight and flesh? There was, however, one notable exception, and that one was Cæsar. He retained his spirits and his flesh in a remarkable degree. Day after day whenever I looked at him he was so alert and active, that no suspicions were aroused of any clever shirking on his part. Still as on we plodded over the dreadful route, Cæsar kept getting fatter than ever, while all the other dogs were sadly showing their ribs and lessening weight. First I thought that perhaps the cunning fellow was stealing from our supplies at night while we slept, but this was found to be an impossibility. So all I could do was to keep my eyes upon him and keep him doing his best. Grandly would he tug at his collar and with his tongue out and panting he would seem to say: "What dog can do more than I am doing?"

Still, as he showed no sign of weariness when the day's work was done, while the other dogs seemed so tired and exhausted, I

resolved to try some plan that would make him betray himself, if he was really fooling us. This I did the next day, by fastening the separate traces which I gave him, with some rotten packthread. I had to be careful to hold on to them while he started, for then he always made a big fuss. However, when he had settled down to his usual work, fancy my surprise to see him tearing along, as though he were doing the most of the heavy work, when the fact was, *he did not pull enough to break that rotten pack thread!*

I quietly called the attention of my Indian companions to his clever hypocrisy. They all laughed at it and declared it was one of the cutest bits of shirking they had ever seen. Cæsar's castigation, then and there received, deterred him from ever trying that trick again.

Cæsar was one of the few dogs that I owned that never was sick or out of condition. Accidents and various disasters were constantly arising and many a good dog would be suddenly rendered unfit for service. But nothing ever happened to old Cæsar. He would never over-strain or overheat himself for anybody. So he came at

last to be called "Old Reliable," and any good driver, who was clever enough to see through his tricks, could get a lot of work out of him.

But through all the years I owned him he would always bear watching. Out of harness as well as in it, he was up to tricks and schemes, some of which seem so incredible, that if they had not been observed by reliable witnesses, we should hesitate to record them here. The following incident of Cæsar's cleverness, showing his possession of reasoning powers in a remarkable degree for a dog, was well known by a number of persons and was much talked about at the time.

It occurred in the spring of the year when the snow melting on the land with the first rains had swollen our creeks and rivers into torrents. On the great lake before our northern home the ice was still a great solid mass, several feet in thickness. Near our home was one of these swollen, rapid streams that, rushing down into the lake had cut a delta of open water in the ice at its mouth. In this open place my faithful servant, Martin Papanekis, had placed a gill net for the purpose of catching fish. Liv-

ing as we did all winter principally upon the fish caught the previous October or November and kept frozen for several months, hung up in the open air, we were naturally pleased to get fresh ones out of the open water in the spring. Martin had so arranged his net by fastening a couple of ropes about sixty feet long, one at each end, that when it was securely fastened at each side of the stream, it was carried out into this open delta-like space by the force of the current, and there hung like the capital letter U. The upper side of this net was kept in position by light wood floats, while medium-sized stones as sinkers steadied it below.

Every morning Papanekis took a basket, and followed by all the dogs of the kennels, visited his net. Placed in the manner we have described, it required no canoe or boat in order to overhaul and take from it the fish there caught. All he had to do was to seize hold of the rope at the end fastened on the shore and draw it toward him. As he kept pulling in, the deep bend in it gradually straightened out until the net was reached. His work was now to secure the fish as he gradually drew in the net and coiled it at his feet. The width of the

opening in the water being about sixty feet, the result was that when he had in this way overhauled his net he had reached the end of the rope attached to the other side. When the fish were secured, all Papanekis had to do to reset the net was to throw some of it out in the right position in the stream. Here the force of the running waters soon carried the whole net down into the open place as far as the two ropes fastened on the shores would permit. Papanekis, after placing the best fish in his basket for consumption in the mission house, and for his own family, divided what was left among the eager dogs that had accompanied him. This work went on for several days, and the supply of fish continued to increase, much to our satisfaction.

One day Papanekis came into my study in a state of great perturbation. He was generally such a quiet, stoical sort of an Indian that I was at once attracted by his mental disquietude. On asking the reason why he was so troubled, he at once blurted out:

"Master, there is some strange animal visiting our net!"

In answer to my request for particulars,

he replied that for some mornings past when he went to visit it, he found, entangled in the meshes, several heads of white-fish. Yet the net was always in its right position in the water. On my suggestion that perhaps otters, fishers, minks or other fish-eating animals might have done the work, he most emphatically declared that he knew the habits of all these and all other animals living on fish, and it was utterly impossible for any of them to have thus done this work. The mystery continuing for several mornings, Papanekis became frightened and asked me to get some other fisherman in his place, as he was afraid longer to visit the net. He had talked the matter over with other Indians, and they had come to the conclusion that either a "windegoo" was at the bottom of it or the "meechee munedoo" (the devil). I laughed at his fears, and told him I would help him to try and find out who or what it was that was giving us this trouble. I went with him to the place, where we carefully examined both sides of the stream for evidences of the clever thief. The only tracks visible were his own and those of the many dogs that followed him to be fed each morning. About two or

three hundred yards north of the spot where he overhauled the net there rose a small abrupt hill, densely covered with spruce balsam trees. On visiting it, we found that a person there securely hid from observation, could with care easily overlook the whole locality. At my suggestion, Papanekis with his axe there arranged a sort of a nest or lookout. Orders were then given that he and another Indian man should, before daybreak on the next morning, make a long detour and cautiously reach that spot from the rear, and there carefully conceal themselves. This they succeeded in doing, and there, in perfect stillness, they waited for the morning. As soon as it was possible to see anything they were on the alert. For some time they watched in vain. They eagerly scanned every point of vision, and for a time could observe nothing unusual.

"Hush!" said one; "see that dog!"

It was Cæsar, cautiously skulking along the trail. He would frequently stop and sniff the air. Fortunately for the Indian watchers, the wind was blowing toward them, and so the dog did not catch their scent. On he came, in a quiet yet swift gait, until he reached the spot where Papan-

ekis stood when he pulled in the net. He gave one searching glance in every direction, and then he set to work. Seizing the rope in his teeth, Cæsar strongly pulled upon it, while he rapidly backed up some distance on the trail. Then walking on the rope to the water's edge as it lay on the ground, to keep the pressure of the current from dragging it in, he again took a fresh grip upon it and repeated the process. This he did until the sixty feet of rope were hauled in, and the end of the net was reached to which it was attached. The net he now hauled in little by little, keeping his feet firmly on it to securely hold it down. As he drew it up, several varieties of inferior fish, such as suckers, or mullets, pike or jackfish, were at first observed. To them Cæsar paid no attention. He was after the delicious whitefish, which dogs as well as human beings prefer to those of other kinds.

When he had hauled in perhaps twenty feet of the net he was rewarded by the sight of a fine white-fish. Still holding the net with its struggling captives securely down with his feet, he began to devour this white-fish, which was so much more dainty than the coarser fish generally thrown to him.

Papanekis and his comrade had seen enough. The mysterious culprit was detected in the act, and so with a "Whoop!" they rushed down upon him. Caught in the very act, Cæsar had to submit to a thrashing that deterred him from ever again trying that cunning trick.

XV

KOONA, THE ESKIMO LEADER

KOONA was a pure white Eskimo dog. Hence his name, as "Koona" is the Cree Indian word for snow. He was of medium size, and as an Eskimo dog, was as perfect as a picture.

While Cæsar was tricky and surprisingly cunning, Koona was simply mischievous. I retained him and a few other animals of the Eskimo variety because of some peculiar excellences. Koona, although at first only kept as a dog in the fish or wood trains, soon developed into such a capital leader dog that he was promoted to a place among the most aristocratic trains. Indeed, after I was so unfortunate as to break poor Voyageur's heart, my sole reliance was upon Koona as a leader even in front of Jack, Cuffy and Muff.

Like other leaders he had his peculiarities and antipathies. One peculiarity was he hated to have a guide running on just ahead

of him. If the guide were a mile or so in advance it would be all right with him. Then he seemed to fancy he was independently doing his work. But if the guide just kept in front of him, Koona would often sulk and be of little use. He ever did his best work when leading over the great icy stretches of lakes or along the hard storm-swept frozen rivers. Then: "Marche, Koona!" was all the instruction he needed, and to the far away point indicated he would gallantly lead his train.

His courage, however, gave out in a blizzard. He would refuse to face it and would cleverly drop back on the lee side of big Jack and allow him to do not only the work of leading but also of drawing that portion of the load which ought to have been shared between them. Jack often thus favoured him and helped him out of some very difficult situations. He seemed to think more of Koona than he did of any other Eskimo dog I ever owned, but that is not saying much.

Like all the Eskimo dogs, Koona was a first-class thief and very clever at his work. If he was off duty and around the kitchen door, it was generally expected that there

would be one fish less in Martin's pan under the stove where the fish were being thawed out in the evening. If the kitchen door was left open for only a few minutes, it was quite sufficient time for Koona. Although a fairly good sized dog he seemed able to make himself very small and silent when he wanted to enter that kitchen unobserved. His favourite plan was to follow in close behind the Indian servant girl and, seizing the first fish reached, as stealthily to retire. If detected and followed up so closely that he could not escape with the fish he would, if possible, suddenly dash around some corner, and lo! when reached by his pursuers he would be found demurely sitting up and apparently wondering what all the fuss was about.

Not a vestige of the fish that we saw him carrying in his mouth is now visible. Where has it gone? Have our eyes deceived us? Surely it must have been some other dog than this solemn looking fellow that sits up so steadily on the ground. But there are some folks who are as clever as dogs, and one says: "Look at the odd way Koona's bushy tail is being held!" On investigation, it is found that the clever rascal is

sitting on the stolen fish and is trying to make his curly tail help to cover the fish out of sight!

He was not long in making the discovery that the fact of his being white like the snow could be utilized to his advantage. If when gambolling around with the other dogs in the light beautiful snow which was there so abundant for long months, Koona heard the jingling bells which indicated that somebody was bringing out the harness to begin work with the dogs, Koona would at once crouch down as low as possible and strive to make himself invisible. No calling would cause him to stir. He had to be hunted up and unceremoniously driven to his harness.

This trick which Koona had of hiding in the snow was a great annoyance, especially in the wintry camps in the woods when we were on a long journey.

As stated elsewhere, we hardly ever waited until daylight ere beginning the day's journey. It was very provoking when we could not easily find our dogs when we wanted them. Koona was one of the mischievous animals that often ruffled even the most stoical driver.

He slept each night when his day's work was done in a hole which he had carefully dug in the snow. As everything around him was of the purest white, he was practically invisible in the starlit night. And as he would not move in the morning until stumbled upon by the searchers or was run in by Jack, it was at times most provoking. One of my drivers to save delay in the morning used to carefully observe where Koona made his nest at night so that he could easily find him in the morning. After a time Koona discovered this, and so the instant he heard anyone moving in the camp in the early morning, he used to quietly steal away to some other spot in the deep snow.

But a happy expedient forever stopped him from again repeating that trick. One night the Indians caught him and dragging him to the camp, they took a quantity of dead coals and pounding them up into powder they most completely blackened him from his nose to the tip of his tail. So thoroughly did the Indians rub in the coal powder that the once spotless white dog was for days about as black as Jack or Cuffy. And so all his efforts to escape de-

tection by hiding in the snow were vain. At first he could not understand the matter but at last it seemed to dawn upon him and he never tried the trick again.

It was amusing to witness how very quickly Koona, as well as many other dogs, could pretend to be ill, or lame, or paralyzed, when they heard the driver coming with harness to make up a train. We look out from our study window and there is over a score of dogs out from the kennels for a big romp. Every one seems in the most perfect condition. See with what wild abandon and joyousness they race and play in the light fleecy snow. There is not a sign of a limp or lameness among them.

Now watch! An Indian has taken down a set of harness, jingling with the musical little bells, four of which are fastened to each collar. As he opens the kitchen door and walks out among the dogs, behold the transformation! Did you ever see such a lot of wounded, limping, paralyzed dogs in your life together! Cæsar sadly crawls along on his two fore feet, dragging his apparently paralyzed hind quarters along the ground. Koona, finding it impossible to hide in the snow, is making the most comical

efforts to get along on one fore and one hind leg. And others are just as amusing in their efforts to try to convince Martin, the driver, that it would be the height of absurdity to think of harnessing up such poor, helpless, worn-out dogs as they are. However, Martin has seen such tricks before and so now he heeds them not. All he wants is a train of four good dogs with which to take his master over for an evening's service at the Fort.

"Astum (come) Pompey! Astum, Black! Astum, Nero! Astum, Muff!"

Only one driver; only one train; and the instant that train is called and each dog's head is in a collar, behold again the transformation among the other dogs: Cæsar's spinal column is instantly all right and his hind legs are as lively as his front ones. Koona, as suddenly, finds it easier to get around on four legs than on two, and so he is dashing around at a great rate. And thus it is with the others. They were clever enough to try the sympathy dodge, but it was one that could be easily seen through and was quietly ignored by the driver in making his selection.

Koona, like Rover, was a great coward.

He would run from a dog much smaller than himself that showed any spirit or pugnacity. But unlike Rover, who was ever a lover of peace, Koona was never happier than when he was getting other dogs into rows, and the bigger the fight the more he enjoyed it.

One thing that ever gave him the keenest enjoyment was to get up a battle-royal between the dogs of the mission and those of the Indian village. To do this he had to use a good deal of cleverness and secrecy, for he well knew that if detected while developing his plans, a second thrashing awaited him. And many a one he got, and yet do it over again he would if he saw a chance.

To understand his favourite method to bring about a big fight between the rival forces, we must explain that all the mission premises, including the dwelling house, church, school house, stable and other outbuildings, were all built by themselves on a few acres of land that, peninsula like, projected out a little into Playgreen Lake, with little bays on each side. The little neck of land joining the mission property to the mainland was only a few hundred feet wide.

So low was it that an old Indian tradition said that in stormy weather it used to be covered by water. However, in our time it was quite high and dry. The place is very rocky and near the neck of land on the mission side are several high rocky places from which a spectator sees the whole Indian village, which spreads out east and west on the main shore, and be he man or dog he is distinctly visible from each way. Here, when the dogs were out of their kennels and playing about in their usual ways, Koona, if not being watched, would stealthily take his place, hid from observation at the mission by some outbuildings.

A constant and unceasing antagonism ever existed between the dogs of the mission and those of the village. It was war, sharp and keen, whenever they met, and woe to any single dog that strayed into the domain of the other side.

Koona's trick, when he could carry it out, was to mount up on this rocky prominence in full view of many of the village dogs, while his own comrades were all out of sight. Then began the most aggravating and tantalizing manœuvres imaginable, accompa-

nied by yelps that doubtless were dog taunts and challenges.

Then the excitement began. In those days when fish were abundant, every Indian house and wigwam swarmed with dogs of all varieties and degrees. They were not slow in hearing these impertinent challenges from the outpost of the foes, and so speedily did they gather that there were dozens of them collected on their own side of the sandy neck of land. Like the wolves in the dark forests which in some respects these Eskimo dogs so closely resemble, their courage increases with their numbers, and so now when they had become such a numerous pack as to feel that they dare make the assault, with fierce yelpings—for the Eskimo dogs can hardly be said to bark—they came dashing across to try by a sudden rush to capture the saucy Koona, who doubtless has been hurling at them all the hard words he had in his vocabulary. But he is not such a fool as to be thus caught or surrounded. He just waits to see that they have really dared to cross the isthmus of neutral ground when, with a rush, he comes tearing around those outbuildings and instantly he is among

the mission dogs and his call is "Yep! yep! yep!" which transformed into English is, "Up Guards, and at them." No second call is needed, for this one is thoroughly understood, and prompt indeed is the response.

With Koona at their head, twenty or thirty dogs and pups are off to meet the oncoming foe.

Generally they met about at the base of the rock, from the top of which Koona had given his saucy challenge.

And it was a battle-royal. It was marvellous how they charged each other and how if one was being worsted, his disengaged comrades came to his rescue. They did not generally fasten on each other, as two fierce dogs in single combat often do, but with wild rushes together would simply try to overpower with weight their opponents and tumble them down in the snow. Still there were some that went in for more serious fighting, and singling out some special dog with whom, perhaps, they had some old scores to settle, they pitched into him for all they were worth.

But where was Koona all this time? We had seen him starting the row and bravely heading our dogs to repel the oncoming foe.

But you need not look for him in the fight for he will not be there. He never was in one, and if he can help it he never will be.

Gallantly did he lead the forces to repel the attack, but only part way. Skilfully he manœuvred himself to one side and then, as the dogs catching sight of the foes dashed on, Koona with cunning strategy clambered up on the rocky eminence from which he had but a short time before issued his saucy, defiant challenge. There, in security, he danced and howled in an ecstacy of delight, as he surveyed the battle raging below!

Of course the battle was not allowed to continue long. The instant the inmates of the mission, and the Indians in their homes, heard the din of battle, they well understood what it meant, and so, speedily rushing out with their heavy dog-whips, they quickly separated the combatants and drove them back to their respective quarters.

When peace again prevailed and the question was asked:

"Who began the row this time?"

At least a half-dozen sharp-eyed Indians declared that from their abodes they had

watched Koona at his tricks again. So Koona was speedily captured, soundly thrashed and sent to bed without any supper.

XVI

TRAVELLING WITH DOGS IN NORTHERN WILDS

IN civilized countries the facilities for travel improve as the population increases. Railroad and steamboat lines are not built or run where there is no prospect of remunerative returns. So we may expect and generally find that the facilities for travel are in accordance with the numbers and demands of the inhabitants of the different regions of the civilized world.

In addition to this we have to take into consideration the character of the climate of each country, and what methods of travel are possible, where the usual facilities common to most countries are impracticable. Yet limited as these methods must necessarily be in the less highly favoured regions, it is interesting to observe that there are found in all such places some facilities which seem to be in perfect harmony with their environments. Take for example the camel in the tropical deserts, and the

Huskie or Eskimo dog, in the arctic regions. Both are fitted for their special work in a very remarkable degree, and there is nothing, considering the condition of these lands, that can at present successfully take their places. If the theory of evolution is true, the camel and the dog are surely the perfected production of long years of development under circumstances the most trying.

With the dogs of the Northland, and "journeyings oft" with them we are now concerned. Travellers in the burning deserts can write whereof they know about the patient camel, but this chapter is to be devoted to a description of a trip with dogs and Indians through the wilds of the Great Northland. Why with dogs? Simply because there is positively no other way possible.

The whistle of no railroad engine or steamer has ever aroused the echoes of these northern interior solitudes, neither is it likely to do so for long years to come.

There are absolutely no roads, or paths, or trails, for hundreds, nor even thousands, of miles. The result is that there is absolutely no other way of winter travelling

THE LORDLY PINES IN WINTER DRESS.

than with dogs, except going on foot, and even that becomes impossible when distances are greater than those where men can carry their own supplies. For their supplies mean much more than merely the food a man would consume. It means his bedding, weapons of defence, axe, snow-shoes and various other things, in addition to kettles in which to cook his food. Hence to those who would there travel, the dog is simply invaluable, in spite of his many defects.

As so much is said in other parts of this book about dogs in general, as well as about some individual ones, I need not in this chapter give any further description of them. My readers must imagine that we are travelling with the splendid dogs elsewhere described or with others like them.

The dog-sleds are not always of the same form or construction. In those regions where there is but little dense forest country, the sleds are made much wider than are those which are used where the trails run through the densely wooded regions. Then in many places experience has shown that the sleds constructed with strong runners, which keep the body of the sled well up

from the ground, are the best for travelling through certain sections of broken country, and especially over the great rough ice fields of the Northern seas.

The perfect sled, however, for use in the forest and lake regions, where we spent our years when in that Northland, was made exactly on the same plan as are the toboggans of Quebec. From the Red River Settlement we had sent out to us by boats in the summer time, some good oak boards. They were twelve feet long, eight or nine inches wide, and an inch thick. Two of these were matched and then firmly fastened edge to edge to each other with strong cross-bars. Then one end was planed down, until it was not more than half of the thickness of the rest of the boards. The thin end was then thoroughly steamed for at least a day, and then, in a place prepared, was bent in the shape required for the head of the sled. Strong deer-skin thongs, well tied, held every part in its right position, and so, as soon as the parts softened by the steam had become hard and rigid, the sled was about finished. Two strong deer-skin loops were fastened at the front, to which the traces of the dogs were attached when

desired. Then much larger loops were firmly secured on each side of the sled for the purpose of fastening on the loads, and now the sled is considered completed, and ready for use. A cariole was one of these sleds fixed up with a comfortable back and parchment sides. Often it was gaily painted and with fur robes and a good trail was a cosy vehicle in which to ride.

For a long trip of, say, several hundreds of miles, during which I would be absent from home for perhaps six weeks, I would take with me three of these oak sleds and a cariole.

Four dogs constituted a train sufficiently strong to draw a loaded sled. The dogs with us were harnessed up in tandem style. Any other method would not have been suitable in such a densely wooded country.

The taking of so many dogs and sleds may appear at first extravagant. But the explanation is simple. It must be borne in mind that these long journeys were made in a country so wild that there were not only no hotels or lodging places of any kind from the beginning to the end of the route, but also there were no shops, or places of any description, where supplies

could be secured for love or money. The only possible exception to this rule was when we were so fortunate as to cross the trail of a hunter who might have been lucky enough to have just shot a moose or a reindeer. Then we might be able to purchase some venison. But even that meant giving in exchange supplies from our sleds, as all bargains were by barter; so we really were not much better off.

Our loads were of a most miscellaneous character. The supplies of food for ourselves and the fish for our dogs generally constituted the heaviest part. For cooking our food and making tea for all, we had a supply of kettles as well as a quantity of unbreakable dishes. Then there were our axes, of which we had to take a liberal supply, as we were continually breaking them on account of the intense frost, making the steel almost as brittle as glass. Some guns and ammunition were also in our loads although not nearly as much as on a summer trip. Then we would expect to find sufficient game to keep our pot boiling, but now in this bitter winter weather there was but little game. So our guns were more carried now, as a precautionary measure

against prowling grey wolves that could make themselves troublesome at times and give us an exciting hour or two, or even a whole sleepless night. Our bedding constituted no inconsiderable part of our loads. To sleep out in the open air in a hole scooped out in a snow drift, and the cold so intense that the mercury is frozen in our thermometers, requires for comfort a considerable amount of bedding. These blankets and fur robes add considerably to the bulk and weight of our loads. Then add to what has already been enumerated, medicines in case of sickness or accidents, articles to mend breakages to dog harness or sleds, a liberal supply of presents for the different bands of Indians we hope to visit, and our necessary changes of clothing, and it will be easily seen that a long trip by dog trains, is not a light or trifling undertaking.

Of my faithful Indian companions with whom I travelled for long years, on many a rough and dangerous journey, it is a pleasure and a joy to write. Untiring and enduring to a degree, they not only won my admiration, but aroused my astonishment at what the human frame was able to ac-

complish. They were ever prone to disparage any of their wonderful deeds, and were exceedingly modest when urged to recount them.

My equipment of Indians for my four sleds and sixteen dogs on these long journeys would be a guide and three dog-drivers.

The first-class Indian guides are certainly wonderfully gifted men. Their ability to lead on through those Northern pathless solitudes, where for hundreds of miles, for months together, not the least vestige of a road is seen, and where to an ordinary white man, there is absolutely nothing to give the slightest hint or information of the correct route—is simply marvellous.

Naturally supposing that they guided their course by the sun, I was amazed to find that in the dark and cloudy days, when the skies were leaden, and I could not tell north from south, or east from west, they swung along on their great snow-shoes with as much accuracy and speed as when the sun, in its northern brilliancy, shone from the cloudless heavens.

Then a greater mystery still about these strangely gifted men came to me as a reve-

lation, and that was that they could travel as well by night as by day; and also that it made but little difference to them whether the stars shone out in all the splendour of those high latitudes or clouds arose and mantled the landscape with gloom and darkness. Still on and on strode the marvellous guide.

On the guide rested the chief responsibilities of the journey. It was his to say when each day's journey was ended. He selected each camping place and assigned to each Indian his allotted work. Running ahead he set the pace and expected that all would endeavour to keep as close on his trail as possible. This was to be the unbroken rule, especially when the weather was threatening or blizzards might assail us. He was supposed to be ever on the lookout for the coming storm, and even before ordinary mortals could detect any sign of its coming he would have us all fleeing for shelter to the distant forest. He was never to go through or over places where the sleds following could not pass. Hence he would never crowd himself between trees growing closely together or spring over fallen ones, unless it was impossible to mark out a trail

around the obstruction. Hence it will be seen that the guide was not merely a man who could push on rapidly at the front, but was one who, as it were by intuition, as he swiftly glided on, took in at a glance the features of the country, and saw where the trail must be made that would entail the least hardships on the dogs and men following.

The guide's position was thus one of great responsibility, and his pay was about twice that of the ordinary dog-drivers.

His sleeping place in the camp was next to "the Master," if he so desired, and it was his morning call of "Koos-Koos-Kwah!" (Wake up!) that had to be promptly obeyed by all.

The dog-drivers I employed when possible to be obtained, were picked men who had not only splendid powers of endurance but intelligent sympathy in their management of the dog-trains committed to their care. Isolated as we were on these trips so completely from the rest of the world, where we had no companionship but our own attendants, in their selection I endeavoured to secure comrades in my servants, each of whom was well treated and

from whom the corresponding congenial fellowship was expected, and was generally received. I never twice hired a sulky or disagreeable man if I could help it. The result was that, having the class of men I wanted, we were a happy little company. We had our innocent jokes and pleasantries when everything was bright around us. Then when dangers assailed us, and even death in the form of the terrible blizzard would threaten to overwhelm us together, as brothers we stood and faced the common peril. This confidential relationship between us as master and men did not spoil them as my servants.

Never did I receive an impertinent or saucy word from any of my own men on any of these, at times, most trying journeys. On the contrary I have seen such evidences of their devotion and self-sacrifice that I am confident that some of them would have died for me.

When starting off on a long journey, of course the guide was at the front. With Voyageur as leader, and Jack, Cuffy and Cæsar constituting my train, I would quickly follow on his trail. Behind me came the other heavily loaded sleds, each

train driven by an Indian. There was often a certain amount of good-natured rivalry among these drivers as to the place they should have in the procession, as they called it.

However, in a few days the matter seemed to arrange itself and the weakest dogs with the lightest loads, generally brought up the rear. Keeping, as of course we must, fairly close together, our progress was according to the speed of the slowest train. To expedite matters there was considerable re-adjustment of the loads in favour of the lighter and younger dogs.

Such travelling was conducive to good appetites. The result was there were several halts during the day for a meal. That there might be as little delay as possible, the guide often carried an axe in his belt. When he decided that it was about time for the next meal he would put on a spurt and run ahead with such rapidity that he would soon be a mile or so in advance. Here he would select a favourable spot near some small, dry trees. Using one of his big snow-shoes as a shovel he soon cleared the snow away from the spot. Then with his keen axe he speedily cut down some of the small

trees. Cutting them into suitable lengths, he thus prepared his wood. His flint and steel, in his skilled hand, soon started the fire. So when the rest of the party came up, a roaring fire was ready for the kettles, which were speedily brought into use. The meal was quickly cooked and eaten and the journey once more resumed. Thus on and on we journeyed until the lengthening shadows told the guide that it was about time he began to look out for the camping-place where the night was to be spent.

The day's march was supposed to end about an hour before the sun went down. This gave ample time in which to prepare the camp and make all the necessary arrangements for there spending the night. The two essentials for a good camp were abundance of dry wood and a sheltered grove of live spruce or balsam trees. When the guide reached what thus suited his experienced eye, the halt was called, and dogs, as well as men, rejoiced at the welcome rest. Yet there was a good deal to be done ere there was any quiet rest. As each train reached the place selected by the guide the first duty of each driver was to unharness his dogs. If he had the misfortune to have

in his train any that were difficult to catch, it was his duty to fasten them in some way so that he could get his hands on them in the morning. Some careless drivers would neglect these precautionary measures and then, as a natural result, there would be trouble, with a certain percentage of fun, before he secured his dogs to resume the journey.

The spot selected for the camp is now carefully prepared. A level place is selected as much protected from the wind as can be found. The big snow-shoes make capital shovels, and so when wielded by the strong arms of these stalwart men, they soon clean out the greater quantity of that snow which was there resting and pile it up in great banks at the rear and on each side of the camp. The camp when thus prepared is really a hollow square with great snow banks on three sides. From the fourth side the snow is all thrown away and here the great fire will soon be blazing. To keep this fire burning great quantities of wood will be required. This is the reason why the guide selected this spot for the camp. And now that the snow has been cleared away, the men exchange their snow-

shoes for sharp axes and, under their vigourous strokes, the tall dry trees are being rapidly felled.

Then they are cut up in lengths of from ten to fifteen feet and dragged or carried, where they can be used as needed. Once the fire is kindled there begins work of a different kind. The sleds are unpacked and while some of us arrange the robes and blankets in the camp, others begin the preparations for the supper. Taking the kettles from the sleds they fill them with snow. So light and dry is this snow that a large quantity is needed to make an ordinary-sized kettle of water. When abundance of water is thus obtained; the meat is boiled in the larger kettle, while the smaller one is reserved for the tea.

And now that our supper is being cooked, the dogs are remembered, and their one daily meal is prepared. Each driver brings from his sled eight large white fish. These are all frozen so solidly that it would be wicked to give them to the faithful dogs while in that condition. To thaw them out with such a glorious fire is an easy task; and placing them where the heat will have full play upon them, the thirty-two fish re-

quired for the sixteen dogs are soon ready. The instant the fish begin frizzling in the heat, the fragrance of the coming supper fairly sets some of the more excitable dogs wild. They are however obliged to wait even if it be a hardship, until their drivers have gathered their trains together and then carefully fed them. Great care, and, at times, a good deal of firmness has to be exercised often backed up with the whip, to keep some of the more greedy dogs, after voraciously bolting their own fish, from cunningly attempting to rob some of the others.

The dogs having been fed and thus disposed of for the night, the next thing is to arrange for our own supper. On the camp-side of the fire a little cloth is spread out, and on it, first thoroughly heated to take the frost out of them, are arranged our metal plates and knives and forks. If we are fortunate enough to have flour at home, we will have with us a quantity of well-cooked heavy cakes, made as nearly as possible of half fat and flour. A number of these are thawed out, for everything here freezable is most decidedly frozen. One Indian with a sharp-pointed stick, lifts the

large piece of fat meat out of the boiling pot and places it in the hot pan on the cloth on the ground, while another fills the heated tin cups with steaming tea. This is our supper, consisting as we have here described of hot fat cakes, hot fat meat and hot strong tea.

Don't turn away in disgust, my good friend. You never enjoyed a meal better in your life. And what is more, you would enjoy this one too, if you just had the same glorious surroundings and the marvellous appetite that the open air life in this bracing climate gives. It is true that we do have some storms and blizzards and occasionally the mercury slips down out of sight, but it is also true that for weeks together the sun shines with wondrous brilliancy during each short day, and then the nights are more glorious still. So with plenty of robes, splendid dogs, a safe guide and the truest of Indian servants, we know nothing more exhilarating and provocative of the fine appetite, that is ready for any food that is prepared, no matter if the preparations be primitive and the cooks only Red Indians.

XVII

STILL ON THE TRAIL WITH THE DOGS

THE preparation of the bed in the winter camp and getting ready to occupy it were interesting operations. In the previous chapter we have described the method of piling up the snow out of the selected camp in drifts or banks on three sides. Sometimes when we were not too weary and there was abundance of live spruce or balsam trees near, we would cut some of them down and luxuriously carpet our camp with their branches finely broken up. Generally we were satisfied to leave a few inches of snow on the ground. On this we spread out our robes and blankets. My Indians were capital bed makers, and I never once had to complain of them. Thoroughly and well would they arrange the under robes and blankets, taking great care to remove every stone or stick which, under one's back or ribs, would not invite sleep.

STILL ON THE TRAIL WITH THE DOGS.

Some travellers prefer to sleep in a great fur bag. I tried one for a season, but so disliked it that I discarded it ever after. There was such a sensation of perfect helplessness when in it, a feeling of powerlessness if one should be attacked by fire or man or beast. So as I found out that these things bothered me, I returned to the old-fashioned bed and always had more comfort in it than in any fur bag I ever tried.

The preparation a person has to make before he can safely get into such a bed is quite elaborate. Anything like disrobing, as is customary in civilization, is there out of the question. The only undressing there permissible, is the unbuttoning of your shirt collar. This makes it a little easier to breathe, and that is an important matter, as you will soon find out. I found it conducive to my comfort to change the moccasins and stockings in which I had been travelling during the day, for much larger ones at night. My weary feet seemed rested by the change, and I slept much better. On my head I wore a loose cap with large fur ears. A long fur coat was very comfortable, but as such garments are very expensive, we found out that very comfortable and serv-

iceable attire could be made for us by the native women, out of the warm Hudson's Bay blankets of the country. To these coats as well as to similar garments, were attached large warm hoods. These hoods, which are called capotes in that country, are very comfortable not only by day when travelling but when pulled up over the fur cap at night.

Thus attired I am now ready for bed, and while I have been thus getting ready for retiring, my faithful Indians have been preparing my bed for me. Every inequality under the robes constituting the bottom has been removed or pounded down. Then blankets are very evenly spread out, and now I am invited: "Please get into bed, and we will cover you up and tuck you in."

These seemed at the time like words for a little child. But years of experience since have not only shown me the wisdom but also the love that prompted them.

I get down as well as I can considering how swathed up I am, and as soon as I am in position the men place the coverings over me and, commencing at my feet, proceed with the process of tucking me in. They do

it most thoroughly and yet so kindly. No mother ever more carefully and completely tucked up her child in a crib or cradle than do my faithful Indians thus tuck me up in my robes and blankets in this snow, to protect me as much as possible from the bitter cold. As stated, they begin at my feet and gradually working up, they reach my shoulders and then they fold back both the blanket and fur robe over my head, and begin tucking them under my shoulders.

I had not at first been educated enough in Indian methods to stand that kind of sleeping, and so it was quite the thing for me, after enduring the choking sensation for a very brief period, suddenly to throw everything off from my head and ask them: "Why do you wish to smother me?"

Patiently would they put up with my inexperience and say:

"We love you too well to smother you. We know it must be difficult at first for you to sleep in this way, but you will soon be able to stand it, and indeed there is no other safe way."

No other safe way? Well, if that is the case, I must try again, and so they patiently

tucked me up again, and I tried once more to learn how to sleep with my head thus completely covered up.

It was one of the hardest lessons I ever had to learn, and it really took years in its accomplishment. The smothery sensations are at times almost unbearable, and indeed there were times when I could not endure them, and so would run the risk of freezing my face, in spite of the kindly entreaties of my watchful Indians.

One night I determined with all the will power at command patiently to submit to the tucking-up process, and did really get soundly to sleep. Some time later on I must have partially awakened, and unconsciously uncovered my face, for at a stage later I remember finding myself vigourously tugging at what in my semi-conscious condition I imagined was the handle of an axe!

When I really did pull myself into a state of consciousness I made the rather startling discovery that I was trying to pull off my nose, and that it was solidly frozen. I was very conscious of the possession of a nose for the next two months while I was en-

deavouring to get it back into its normal condition.

The Indians generally provided themselves with large rabbit-skin blankets, each one requiring about a hundred and twenty skins. They were, without exception, the warmest robes of any description, I ever saw. With one of these apiece, my Indians would sleep with the greatest comfort throughout the coldest, wildest night in that wild Northland, and spring up, often literally steaming hot in the morning. I tried these snowy-white rabbit robes one winter, but found them so warm that I had to discard them as I sweat so much under them that I was continually catching cold afterwards.

We were never sorry if a fall of snow came gently down upon us, of, say, a couple of feet in depth. We did not care for its arrival until we were cosily covered up in our beds. Then, however, it was welcome. Gently and warmly it covered us, as a blanket spread over shivering children by a loving mother's hands.

The fire at our feet was not kept burning all through the night, unless the cold was

of unusual severity or we were disturbed by prowling, saucy, grey wolves. These disturbances were, however, rare, and as I insisted on my men being well supplied with sufficient blankets, we generally slept undisturbed until the time arrived when we had arranged to resume our journey.

The getting up was a trying ordeal. We had to spring up from under our blankets, where we had been resting in warmth and comfort, out into that frigid air, where Jack Frost ruled with merciless power. My! but he did pinch us, and that without pity.

When we cuddled down to sleep, a great blazing fire was burning at our feet. That very spot is covered over with a couple of feet of snow.

The outlook is dreary indeed, but there is no time for murmuring, we have been in worse plights than we are this morning and this scene can soon be transformed. And it is. The snow-shoes, again used as shovels, speedily clear away the light, dry snow. Strong arms so energetically ply the axes that an abundance of dry wood is secured, and flint and steel in expert hands do the rest, and once again to gladden our

hearts and warm our bodies the great fire is blazing before us. In its warmth, as well as from the active exercise in which we had all been engaged—for no one plays dead-head here, we forget our shiverings and are in splendid trim for our breakfast, which is prepared as speedily as possible.

"What is your bill of fare?" I fancy I hear some good friend asking.

Well, interested reader, it is exactly the same as it was last night, and what is more it will be the same until the fat cakes give out, and from that on it will be just meat and tea, meat and tea, until the trip is ended or the supplies give out, often the latter.

After breakfast and prayers, the dogs are captured, not always an easy task, as has already been shown. The sleds are reloaded and the journey is resumed. This is travelling with dogs and is a correct description of how it was carried on for many years in what were known as the Hudson's Bay Territories.

Of course there were the variations incident to fierce blizzard storms assailing, or savage wolves attacking, while *en route* or when sheltered at the camp fire.

Then there were sometimes long delays. Some were caused by the great cracks or fissures in the vast icefields where, in spite of the fact that the ice was several feet thick, yet so great was the contractive power of the frost that these fissures suddenly opened, and some were so wide and long that great were the difficulties and long the delays in getting across them. We could sometimes, over the narrow ones, improvise a bridge out of a long dog sled, but when the cracks were many yards wide and extended each way as far as the eye could reach we found the crossing over no easy matter.

A raft of ice was the best or, putting it more accurately, the only way possible for us to safely reach the other shore. This raft we made by use of our axes. We selected a spot where there would be the greatest economy in the ice cutting, for at the best place the job before us was a long and laborious one. Then the axes were kept busy and at length a great raft of ice was cut loose and on it we embarked our dogs and sleds, and by various manœuvrings we managed to reach the farther shore.

We were sometimes also sadly delayed in the forests by the numerous wind-felled trees, which often seemed to be almost insurmountable barriers to our progress. The axes again were called into service, and it did at times seem as though we were spending half of our time in clearing out a trail along which it was possible for our patient dogs to pull our heavy sleds.

Thus, with varying fortunes, on and on we plodded, until at length the smoke from the tops of the distant wigwams and the noisy, hostile reception of innumerable Indian dogs, told us that our long trip by dog-train, for the present, was about ended.

XVIII

OUR DOGS IN SUMMER TIME

AS a general thing the dogs have a long holiday during the summer months. There are no roads and consequently no land vehicles. So truly is this the case that among some of the northern tribes the missionaries, in translating such words in the Bible as "carriage," "chariot," or "waggon," found nothing else available than "dog sled." It seemed rather startling to hear a brother missionary tell his people, through the interpreter, that when the venerable patriarch Jacob went down to join his son Joseph in Egypt, he made the journey in a dog sled!

As the Indians have no work for their dogs in the summer, they never or very seldom feed them. They leave them to forage for themselves. They are the scavengers of the country, and all the sanitation of the land is left in their charge, and well do they do the work.

The dogs, however, depend principally upon their cleverness in capturing fish for their food. Some of them are ever haunting the shallow places and bays, and are quick to notice the fins of the great jackfish when they crowd in so near the shore that the shallow water betrays their presence. This is the clever dog's opportunity, and it is interesting to observe how noiselessly they can wade out and endeavour to capture the great fish. We have said "endeavour" for there are jackfish so large that no single dog can capture one alone. Still the plucky dog will make the attempt and often he returns with fore-legs limping as a result of the powerful blow which the muscular fish gave him as he attempted to seize it. Yet wounded and defeated, he is ever ready to try again.

The large Huskie dogs can grip and hold in their teeth, jackfish up to ten or twelve pounds weight, but I have never seen a dog able to capture a twenty pound fish, and in those days there were scores of such, and even heavier ones, in every bay. The harvest time for jackfish is from the latter part of May into July. After that the dogs have to be on the lookout for other varieties of

fish. In thus hunting for their living, I have known dogs to wander over a hundred miles away from their homes, and to remain away for weeks.

Once, when travelling in summer in my canoe, with two Indians, as we paddled around a big bend in a river we saw in the distance what we first thought was a pack of wolves. We quickly paddled back out of sight and got ready our rifle, and loaded the two shot-guns with ball.

Then cautiously coming on again, the sharp-eyed Indians soon discovered that our imaginary wolves were a pack of Indian dogs. They were industriously fishing in a broad, shallow bay at the river side, and to judge from their sleek, fat bodies they were having a good time.

We did not disturb them, and they were so intent on their fishing that they hardly gave us passing notice. And of course they were too wise to bark or rather howl at us, as the noise would have disturbed the fish, which was what they did not desire.

We watched them for some time with much interest, and saw two dogs working together and successfully landing quite a large fish. Sometimes twenty or thirty

dogs, from several Indian families, will suddenly disappear shortly after the ice melts in the early summer and will not return until the ice is again forming in the autumn.

The fun begins when it is seen that some of the mother dogs are followed by litters of puppies, two or three months old. These alert little dogs are as wild as young wolves. Never having seen a human being, they resent all attempts at familiarity on the part of the Indians, especially of the boys, and bite most viciously on every side. They act as though they are astonished at their mothers' familiarity with the Indians and whine and cry to return to their usual haunts. It does not take the Indians long to familiarize them with their surroundings and they say that puppies that come in this way make the best of sleigh dogs.

I never let my dogs run wild like this. Jack and Cuffy were always house dogs, and occasionally one or two others. When I did not need any of my trains for ploughing they were all sent out on an island in the lake, with an Indian fisherman, who, plentifully supplied with nets, kept them in good condition throughout the summer.

I did have some work for my dogs after I had been in the country a short time.

We found that potatoes and other vegetables grew to perfection in our garden, and that even wheat and other grains, if sown just as soon as the frost left the ground, also ripened perfectly.

So to help the Indians I secured, after a good deal of trouble, a good plough in the Red River Settlement. I had to take it in a row-boat four hundred miles to my home. I made a harrow out of birch wood and some iron teeth which I had dragged out on my dog sled with seed grain.

In the spring I harnessed up six or eight dogs to my plough and without very much trouble I succeeded in ploughing up several small fields and gardens. The Indians had nothing better than strong hoes, and so they were pleased to have me help them prepare their potato patches with the plough.

After sowing my grain in my own fields, I harnessed my dogs to my harrow and so had all nicely covered. Some seasons I did very well.

Eight dogs arranged as four teams, dragged the plough along through the soil very well. The trouble was not that they

were not strong enough. They seemed to consider the whole thing a big joke. They were full of fun, and when started in the furrow considered that it was their duty to get across that field as quickly as possible.

Woe to the man between the handles of the plough if, when the dogs were straining at their work, he let the point come out of the ground and thus lost his grip on the land. In an instant the dogs were off, and he was indeed a clever ploughman if he was quick and skillful enough to get that plough point in the ground again before the active dogs had jerked him and the plough to the end of the furrow.

I had a great deal of amusement in trying to make ploughmen out of some of the big Indians. Great stalwart hunters that would face a big bear without flinching, with only their knife as a weapon, simply quailed before, or rather behind, that plough. Active and alert as they generally were, its control with eight lively dogs as the motive power was something more than they had been accustomed to, and at first was a puzzle to them.

They soon, however, mastered it, but it was noticed that new hands at first insisted

on having a person walk on ahead between the two leading dogs to stop them if anything went wrong behind.

To persons who have not in this or other ways tested the strength of the dogs it is simply marvellous what they are able to do. They seem to have a latent strength, which, when excited they are able to put forth, that is almost incredible except to those who have witnessed it.

I have had six dogs harnessed to a sled on which rested the end of a great stick of green spruce timber, thirty-six feet long and ten inches square. The trail on which they were dragging that heavy load was anything but good, and so it was apparently as much as they could do to move it slowly along. Tongues were out and the steady fellows were all pulling in perfect unison, and it seemed as though it would be cruel to try and urge them to quicken their pace. But while we were loth to do it, there was something else that did it and the burst of speed and strength which followed on the part of the dogs was a revelation to us.

A beautiful fox looking for rabbits suddenly took it into his head to come out from the dense forest, and as he crossed

the trail not a hundred yards in front, he stopped for a minute on a little knoll and saucily yelped out his little defiant barks at the approaching dogs. This was too much for them to stand, and so with a mad rush they were off. Heavy as that timber was, it did not seem so just now to those excited dogs as away they dashed after that saucy fox. Not far, however, did they go before the head of the sleigh struck against a tree with such violence that it was not only completely smashed, but the dogs were jerked back with such force that I was agreeably surprised when I found that no bones were broken.

In some places, where there were long stretches of open beaches on the shore, dogs were sometimes used with tracking lines to drag the boats along. This was not always much of a success. It, however, afforded some amusement as well as variety to an afternoon's outing in a skiff or canoe, to be thus pulled along by the motive power of four dogs running on the shore, attached to a rope, say, two hundred feet long.

XIX

CUI BONO?

IT may well be asked, What were the results of all this dog-travelling? What were the returns for all these hardships and risks, as well as for the considerable expense that must necessarily have been incurred.

These trips were not taken in the pursuit of scientific objects, even if missionaries have made rare discoveries, and have added much to the sum total of the world's knowledge. They were not taken by mere seekers after the precious metals that nature had hidden away in the remote regions, still unexplored, and yet the news of the existence of some of the finest mines in the world has come through missionaries. These men were not fortune-seekers, for their lot was to live among a people so poor that the richest of them could carry all of their possessions on their backs, with the exception of their dogs.

Yet judging by the results accomplished,

the transformation wrought in the lives and conduct of the Indians and the security to life and property, and the general contentment of the people, we see, even if this were all, abundant reason for thankfulness that the people could be reached even by dog-travelling in winter, as well as by canoeing in summer. That there have not for many years been uprisings among the Indians against the whites, as well as inter-tribal wars among themselves, is not altogether owing to the rule of the Hudson's Bay Company, wise and prudent though it was, but it was more owing to the presence and teachings among them of the missionaries of the various churches.

In studying this question, it must be borne in mind that, as has been stated elsewhere (but we desire to here emphasize it, as it is so easily overlooked), there are vast regions and many communities of Indians that could not possibly have been reached in any other way than by dog trains. Ere the missionary did reach them, they were living lives degraded and immoral and were the slaves of most depressing superstitions. The Indian is naturally religious in his primitive condition. To him everything is

"good" or "bad medicine." The two antagonistic forces of good and bad are ever at work and he is the object of love or hate.

Hence without Divine Revelation, he feels that, like a leaf blown hither and thither, he is a victim between the two contending forces. Hence, he is often in great terror of coming disasters. Until the missions broke the power of the conjurers or medicine men, the great majority of the people lived in constant dread.

The power and influence for evil, some of these famous conjurers had over the masses of the natives, was almost incredible. They had made the people believe that by their conjuring they could call down all sorts of evils upon them, that they could take away their loved ones or rob them of their health, with a word. They arrogated to themselves power over the game in the forest and the fish in the lakes, could decide which hunter should succeed and which should fail. So deeply had they bound the people down under this malignant power that they ruled as despots over them and demanded and received the best of everything the people possessed. To enforce and retain this superstitious power over the people they

A MEDICINE MAN.

owned the secret of manufacturing most deadly medicines, and they were not slow in using them to terrorize the community by the mysterious death of some one who had been presumptuous enough to question their pretensions.

This baneful class is now about extinct, thanks to the courage and self-sacrifice of the missionaries, who by canoe and dog-trains travelled to those distant interior regions and by their tact and teachings have lifted the people up from that dark nightmare of fear and dread under which, for generations, they lived. Even some of these once dangerous characters have been transformed into honoured citizens, while those who still cling to the old life have so lost their power that their malisons are now laughed at by the people.

If it were thought necessary, we could give many individual cases where the transformation wrought by the reception of the Gospel brought in among the Indians in this way, has been as marked and delightful as is recorded in any missionary annals.

Some of these red men, who once were bitter opposers of the Glad Tidings thus brought them, have become ministers and

missionaries to their own people. Others are duly qualified school teachers and now among their own people are doing a grand work in wisely educating the coming generation.

Many of them, after they had received Christianity, became so anxious to improve their condition that they have exchanged their old methods of depending entirely on the uncertainties of the chase and have accepted from Canada's Government, reservations where they are cultivating the land and, by honest, patient industry, are making a comfortable living for themselves and their children.

These transformations have not been easily brought about. Long years of persistent toil and patient endurance were necessary. Much is required to induce a people to completely change their mode of living. Yet it has been done by many of these Indians, and marvellous indeed is the completeness of the transformation.

Comfortable houses have taken the place of the old cold wigwams. The garb of civilization has supplemented the skin dress of former times and abundance of daily food is now the normal condition of things

where formerly it was frequent starvation or something very near to it, followed by a gorge when a reindeer happened to be shot or a bear's den raided.

The beneficent changes wrought in the beliefs and conduct of the men towards the women, if nothing else had been accomplished, have been sufficient to repay a thousandfold for all the hardships endured and even for the lives lost in their accomplishment.

As in nearly all pagan lands the condition of women was most deplorable. None of the founders of the world's systems of religion, except the Lord Jesus Christ, had anything good to say of woman. Her inferiority and even that she was soulless was widely taught.

The great Founder of Christianity taught the great lessons of the equality of the sexes, and by His own loving deeds and words lifted woman to her true position and left His example, as well as His words, to be carried out in all the ages. This duty is one of the missionary's highest joys. And in the acceptance of Christ's teachings by the people to whom the missionary goes, followed by the speedy uplifting of women, he

meets with a recompense that pays him for all his dangers in blizzard storms and in frigid camps, even if the bitter cold has nearly, if not quite, chilled him into that exquisite but delusive delirium which, unless he be speedily aroused therefrom, is quickly followed by death.

When first he wends his way with his dog-trains into the pagan regions he finds that although the Indian men are most admirable hunters, yet the shot deer has to be carried home on the back of the mother or wife, while the man, with his gun on his shoulder, stalks on ahead. When the patient woman has skinned and cooked the venison, she has to go and sit apart with the girls and dogs while the men and boys fill themselves with the savoury meat. Then what is left they are allowed to share with the dogs. Often did the men amuse themselves by throwing the partially picked bones to see them fought for by the dogs and women. In some places in those days it was a sin for a woman to grow old, for then, when her strength departed and she could neither snare rabbits nor catch fish, she was cruelly put to death. But the dog bells on the collars of the dogs

of the missionaries have rung in a brighter and a better day in place of those old dark times, which are now almost gone. In many places so true is this that the very remembrance of them is now as a hideous dream or nightmare which they would, if they could, speedily forget. The things they once loved they now hate, and that with such intensity that they are grieved if anyone casually refers to them.

But why recount more? Surely these marvellous transformations, and the fact that now there are many happy Christian homes with all that this implies, where once even the name itself was unknown, is a sufficient return for all that was endured on all the coldest, hardest and most painful trips ever made by the missionaries with the dog-trains.

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